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HANDSET REMINISCENCES

Recollections of an Old-Time Printer and Journalist

By J.ared B.enedict GRAHAM

Printed by the
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Salt Lake City, Utah
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1915

THE AUTHOR

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TO THE MEMORY OF MY OLD-TIME FRIEND AND SIDE-PARTNER EDWARD T. PLANK THIS VOLUME IS FRATERNALLY DEDICATED.

To the Printing Fraternity

"Handset Reminiscences," having been prepared for your special entertainment, will be sold by subscription only. I am assured it will be read sooner or later by most printers. Please don't borrow it.

I am in my seventy-sixth year; was in the printing business over fifty years—carrying a working card about thirty, the rest of the time "enjoying" myself as "editor, publisher and proprietor" of country newspapers.

In the spring of 1908, before the printers' pension law became operative, I was placed on the retired list of No. 115 because of disability. To paraphrase, my eyes were bad and my fingers queer.

The incidents here sketched are true—as nearly to the letter as I have been able to set them down between regular shifts at other labor.

I am kindly permitted to use two short stories and part of another which appeared years ago in the Inland Printer, under the heading "Handset Reminiscences," also, one that was published in the International Journal.

Brethren, I shall be gratified if this book entertains you; more gratified if it deserves a big sale and receives it.

Price $1.25 postpaid. Send orders to

Yours fraternally,

JERRY B. GRAHAM,

142 E. Sixth South Street, Salt Lake City, Utah.

March 1, 1915.

EDWARD T. PLANK
President I. T. U., 1888 to 1891

In Lieu of Foreword.

As this book is made up of anecdotes relating to myself, is in the nature of an autobiography and there is little to explain, a foreword seems hardly necessary. But in the beginning I wish to apologize for the crudities of my work. I was not educated for the editorial profession, or any other for that matter. As explained in one of the sketches, I took up the pen by sheer force of circumstances.

I hope not to be criticised too severely. The greatest authors have not always been those who could command faultless language. J. Fennimore Cooper in his day was the most successful American writer of fiction. Millions of readers were entranced by his absorbing creations, without discovering that often they were not only preposterous but execrably written. Even the queen of England begged him to give something of the earlier life of Leather Stocking, and the result was "The Deerslayer," first volume of the "Leather Stocking Tales" though the last written. But Mark Twain came along, and pointed out that there are a score of rasping errors of composition and misfit words in some pages of those stories; that in the action, for instance, Leather Stocking shot at a mark and with wonderful accuracy and a strange rifle hit a nailhead at three hundred paces that could not be seen at fifty with a spyglass; while his marvelous woodcraft, when stripped of romance, was in many details unreal and absurd.

H. C. Williams, my successor as editor of the Bingham Bulletin, inserted in that paper the following personal after I had gone to California and when, as he says, I was unable to defend myself. I can forgive him for it, and even thank him, except as he in a way puts me in a class with Judge C. C. Goodwin, without doubt the ablest and smoothest newspaper writer the west has ever produced. Williams was a first-class printer—like myself not an author, born or made. If you discover crudities in his composition, as in mine, forget it. Tread lightly on the tacks. Let the pure gold intended obscure the dross.

"When men of courage and imagination came into these mountain solitudes in the early days they became transformed. There was no sorbid commercialism to soil them; and there was nothing to check them from being absorbed into the spirit of the mountains and forests over which hovered the glamor of purple and gold of the setting sun, which men had seen from afar since the birth of history and have finally followed until the star of empire sank into the Pacific. Call it Colchis or California these men were of the heroic mold, and they will stand always heroic to those who follow and bring their humdrum world with them and transform the grand solitudes into routine. The race is dead or dying and most all of them will soon be altogether heroic. One meets relics of it now and then, old and gray with their large hearts and lovable natures still imparting the spirit of the grand solitudes which they absorbed a long generation ago; and so they will go on to the end, for the beauty of the solitudes that transformed them will not let go of them.

"The editor met a couple of these sojourners a dozen years ago in Salt Lake City, and if he mentions one of them now it is because he is away and cannot exercise the veto which his retiring dispositon would certainly impose. One was "Jerry" and the other was "Judge." And it is only to the world that knows them not that they become plain Mr. Graham and plain Mr. Goodwin—in our hearts they are Jerry and Judge, and so only I and others who really know them may ever think of them.

"When Mr. Graham severed his relations with the Bulletin a few days ago he closed a newspaper career which time had made romantic and to which rapid change in western environment has lent an element of pathos.

"In 1903 he visited California and while there sought for such friends as a lapse of forty years might still have left. With 128 others in 1861 he was a member of Eureka Typographical Union No. 21. A record had been kept of their comings and goings, and most all of them had gone, to not return there, or anywhere. Himself had been marked "probably dead." Of the whole number half-a-dozen were left in Frisco, and a few others were still alive but elsewhere.

"Equally pathetic was his visit to the New York Herald office about five years ago. He had worked there in the days of the elder Bennett, in 1859 and later. Out of a force of upwards of two hundred in that year not one was left, and the oldest man in the office dated from 1865. Mr. Graham's identity was established by his references to the old boys, who were still reverently remembered, and finally by the payrolls bearing his name. He at once became the wonder of the office, and chaperoned by Eugene Young, a night editor, formerly of Salt Lake, there was a hot time in the old town, and the freedom of the Herald and all of its belongings were his. He was invited to take some perfunctory place on the editorial staff, where his main duty would be drawing a salary. But Jerry is not built that way, and he returned to his post here in Bingham.

"Mr. Graham was born in Rochester, New York, in 1839, and began the printing business as "devil" in the Rochester Advertiser. From thence he went to New York City, and at various times worked in the Herald, Tribune and World, when those papers were presided over by the elder Bennett, Horace Greeley and Manton Marble.

"In 1860 he went to San Francisco (via the Isthmus), where he was employed on the Herald, said to have been the first paper printed on the coast. It had been boycotted by the vigilantes in 1852, but got out from under and lived until 1862.

"In 1862, when the first great silver boom was on, Mr. Graham went to Virginia City, and rode into Nevada with Hank Monk, the furious driver who in that year gave Horace Greeley a shaking up on a ten per cent down grade; setting type in Virginia City two years at $1 per thousand. Mark Twain and Dan de Quille were at that time local editors of the Territorial Enterprise. Mr. Graham returned to New York in 1865.

"In 1871 Mr. Graham established the Lapeer, (Mich). Democrat, which by the way now strangely bears the legend "Established in 1852."

"He went to Pitkin, Colorado, in 1881, and purchased the Pitkin Independent. He white washed himself in this venture; saw a mining camp of 2,000 people dwindle to 200, parted with $9,000 in less than four years and left the mountains with barely $15.

"Mr. Graham started the Telluride, Colorado, Republican in 1887 for a company, and later was connected with the Cheyenne, Wyo., Stock Journal. In the fall of 1895 he purchased the Bulletin.

"May 12, 1860, Mr. Graham joined New York Typographical Union No. 6, and is therefore among the oldest union men on the Pacific slope. He is also a mason, and a member of the supreme lodge of A. O. U. W.

"This career is a more romantic and productive one than to make a million and then retire and be devoured by the acids of unrest, and soured in spirit; for Jerry in his up and downs was always as his friends have known him—sweet in temper, generous and unpretentious. If he had troubles they were soon buried, but his spirit would go out in sympathy because of the tribulations of his friends, or of anybody.

"Jerry, like Judge, was born of the spirit of the mountains, and like them will not change. Those who love him most would like to emulate him in disposition, in faith, and in the personal honor which is the firmest thread in his nature. If you don't know these things you merely know J. B. Graham; you don't know Jerry."

Once a Hobo.

Strictly speaking this story is out of place in these pages—going back as it does to my ante-handset days; but as it relates a most vivid memory, that had much to do with my after career in having bred wanderlust in my system, it is given with the hope that it may interest.

Being left an orphan when four years old, my guardian farmed me out to an aunt, who was to bring me up in the way I should go and send me to school.

We went to live with my grandparents in Onondaga county, a few hours' ride from the then village of Syracuse—in a community still clinging to many quaint customs and the simple life of the early settlers.

Grandfather's weather-beaten but comfortable house was small, yet contrived to stow away a dozen guests in an emergency, and often seated as many at Thanksgiving feasts of turkey, Indian pudding and pumpkin pies that might have tempted the appetite of a modern epicure. All the cooking was done by a great fireplace, made cheery during winter evenings with blazing back-log and four-foot wood; while beside it was a brick oven in which a week's baking could be done at one heating.

Grandfather's corner by the fireplace, sacred to him, was often encircled on winter nights by neighbors who came to hear him tell of days of frontier life in Connecticut, when Indians, wolves, catamounts and other "varmints" had to be reckoned with; of many hair-raising ghosts that he had not only seen but talked with; of being a lad of fourteen when the Revolutionary war ended, and practicing to go as a drummer boy; of seeing, when grown to manhood, representatives to congress during recess sitting barefooted and coatless on the steps of the capitol, eating frugal lunches. (Never again!)

At 8 o'clock it was me for bed, no matter if the wraith of Tecumseh had its victim by the hair; and I had to go to a tiny attic room in the dark. After hearing a hair-raising story I would unloose my only "gallus," climb the stairs two steps at a jump, and with one move shed "trousers" and land in a bank of feathers, covering my head until nearly smothered. In the midst of the story-telling a pan of apples and a pitcher of cider from the cellar, with chestnuts, hickory nuts, beechnuts or butternuts from the garret, would be set before the guests. Then when they were gone, the embers were carefully banked, to preserve a bed of live coals for morning. Matches? They had just superceded the flint and steel and were rare.

What memories! Of the days of spring's awakening in the maple woods, gathering sap to be boiled to sugar, amidst the cawing of crows and the welcome notes of robin redbreast. Then there was soap-making day, when an out-of-doors fire had to be built, and the big iron kettle was in use again; lye was leached from fireplace ashes, saved up during winter in a contrivance that looked like a pyramid turned turtle; and soft soap was made—it was soap all right, that not only cleansed my hands of dirt, but of skin and warts. Then in November came the pig-sticking, with the kettle boiling again to scald away hair and bristles; and I as a small boy was supposed to inflate bladders and make rattle boxes of them for smaller fry.

In those days there could be no thrifty economy without winter stores of barrels of salt pork and beef. No one of the present has an idea of the many uses then for fats and tallow, albeit oleomargerine and kindred abominations were unknown. Grandma was wont to fill an old saucer with lard, placing a wick in it, and it made a tolerable light by which she would sit for hours sewing and mending. Did you ever see or hear of a tallow dip, such as was used before the era of ill-smelling fish-oil lamps? They were made in a cold room, where I had to thresh my hands to keep them warm, by dipping wicks—a dozen at a time strung on sticks—in a boiler of warm tallow, repeating until they had taken on the required coating. How I despised that job. Then came tin molds —the wonder of the time—in a nest of which a dozen candles, looking much like the present stearine variety, could be cast at once. Cowhide, kipskin and calfskin—they were the only materials from which boots and shoes were made. So if a young lady could not abide calfskin, it was beaded moccasins for her or nothing. Here again was use for tallow—besides rendering leather impervious to wet, it made it pliable; and when mixed with lampblack answering for blacking, giving footwear a go-to-meeting sleekness—for there was little real blacking. Unless my little kips were kept saturated some one had to help put them on my poor calloused feet, and it needed two men and a bootjack to take them off.

What a smell greeted one on opening the cellar door—an odor that was in every household! There in the stairway hung a monster codfish, four feet long if an inch —no sturgeon or other execrable substitute then, costing not more than fifty cents, from which the frugal housewife could strip a hundred meals as needed. And speaking of fish, what pride I felt wending my way homeward from the old mill dam lugging a string of suckers and bullheads—all same catfish! Ah, the joy of roaming in brown October days through the deep wild woods, gathering nuts to store in the big chest for winter! Many were the happy hours I spent each season hunting "bumble" bees' nests, gathering dandelions and cowslips for greens, and picking wild berries.

I recall the small, unventilated, but dear old school house, with a single room of maybe 20x30 feet and an 8-foot ceiling, where thirty to forty pupils breathed the same air, and some made engagements with tuberculosis germs, to be kept in after years; where the teacher went over head and ears if he ventured beyond addition, multiplication and division into simple fractions; where he wore out an apple-tree sprout a day, and more if he thought they were needed; where when a lad of 7, I marched proudly from the foot to the head of the class for spelling "lucre," after it had been missed twelve times by twelve dull boys in their teens; where we played "fox and geese" on the green sward before baseball was thought of; where we got licked by the farmer and by the teacher for hooking summer apples from hard-by orchards; where all the neighborhood, or as many as could crowd in, gathered to witness "David and Goliath," "Old Mother Hubbard" and other school exhibits—the nearest approach to sure enough theatricals they had ever seen.

Is life happier or more enjoyed in these whizzing, toot-tooting times than it was then? Show me!

My aunt devoutly believed in the old saw, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." I had already been spoiled so she earnestly knocked the dust out of me on an average of twice a day until I had reached my ninth year. But she was always just, and loved me.

My experience as a child makes me now a thorough believer in the virtue contained in an apple-tree spout. A gad of some kind was responsible for much of the good—if any—in my present makeup.

What a lesson is contained in this little incident! A playmate asked me to go a fishing with him one Sunday. I promised to do so, albeit such "doings" on the Sabbath day were strictly interdicted. He called for me and I asked consent.

"Certainly not," was the answer. "You know better."

"But I promised Johnny to go with him."

"You did? Then get ready," and my aunt placed a nice lunch in my pocket, and kissed me.

That night I got a sound threshing for giving my word to do something I knew was wrong; and so it was impressed upon me for life that I must never give my word to do a thing and not do it.

Today I not only believe in corporal punishment for the child, administered in proper spirit, but also that it was an evil day when the public whipping post was abolished. Public punishment got down under the hide of a culprit and brought to the surface any sense of shame left in him. It outclassed breaking rock and prison grub in holding criminals in check, and cost a heap less.

Like most orphans I was pointed out as such, sympathized with and fed pie and cake by kindly old dames of the neighborhood, also often told that when of age I was to come into a small fortune—all of which made my head swell faster than my body grew. Accordingly, the idea being drilled into my system that to be an orphan raised me to a superior order of being, as I became older I developed as a conceited, self-conscious and disagreeable sort of kid. But maybe early conceit made me nervy and served a good turn later on, for when thrown on my own resources I had to do and did some nervy things.

In the spring of 1848—my ninth year—I was sent back to the old homestead to spend a season with my brothers and sisters, who were leasing it from the estate.

It was the happiest season of my life. With a sporty dog for a playmate, how the days flew by, in the woods and green fields and by the brook, hunting and fishing!

"How dear to this heart are the scenes of my childhood,
  What fond recollections present them to view—
The orchard, the meadow and deep tangled wildwood,
  And every fond spot which my infancy knew."

They were all there, and every picture as I recall it seems as bright today as then. But ah, the dear ones, long gone!

My aunt had married a laekadaisical sooner, who for convenience I shall have to call uncle. Aside from having a game eye that made him seem like he was always squinting along a gun barrel, he wasn't bad to look at; but I must believe she was moved to hook on to her very last chance, having passed to the strictly old maid estate. His general appearance suggested a habit of sitting by the fire or in the sun for considerable periods, gathering dust that was seldom brushed away. And he sang psalms through his nose.

They came through Rochester in the fall, on their way to the wilds of Illinois to take up land, and had planned that the orphan was to go with them. My uncle had swelled me up with stories of hunting rabbits and prairie chickens; and I was to have a gun of my own, and furnish the family with game. So I was crazy to go; but my guardian had made arrangements for my entering school, and positively forbade it.

That did not fease my aunt, for I was like a son to her. Having a will of her own, she took me with them.

What is now known as the far west was then down on the maps as the "Great American Desert," and was practically unexplored until in the following year, when the rush to the gold fields of California was on. Illinois, Wisconsin and

Missouri were of the far west, and Kansas, Iowa and Nebraska unknown. Ohio, Michigan and Indiana were called the west. I refer to these conditions so it will be the better appreciated that a New York family emigrating to Illinois were looked upon as just about moving off of the known earth, and long farewells were said. How my uncle ever got a hump on to take so serious a step is more than I can tell. The broad acres of the plains did not have to be cleared, were rich and easily tilled, and it may be he thought he would be able to make an easier living there.

The journey of that day to the far west is worth describing. Many made it in covered wagons—prairie schooners—from eastern states along the shores of Lake Erie and Lake Michigan through Ohio and Indiana, though more proceeded via the Erie canal to Buffalo and thence around the great lakes to Milwaukee and Chicago. The New York Central railroad had been extended up through the state to Buffalo, but railroading was expensive, and many could not be hired to ride after an engine. With simple country people there was a dread of the strange machine on wheels, and of bumping over the crude, badly-laid rails, of a kin with the antipathy of a chink for "foreign devils." We took the water way.

Imagine a two-days journey from Rochester to Buffalo—seventy-eight miles! After the novelty wore off there was little to make the time pass except dodging low bridges, sympathizing with the crippled, half-fed tow horses, and now and then disturbing a skunk on the towpath. A welcomed diversion was when, passing a tempting looking orchard, some traveler would jump ashore, fill his pockets with fruit and jump back again before the "Sarah Ann" had made more than a few lengths.

At Buffalo we took passage on the steamer "Niagara." In size it must have been a marvel of the time, for there were on board 1,200 passengers—more than half in the steerage. My, that steerage was a bouquet! The cabin ladies soon became experts in keeping to windward of its gangway.

In these days of forty miles an hour few travelers go from Buffalo through Lake Erie, the Detroit river, Lake St. Clair, Lake Huron, "around the horn" through the straits of Mackinaw and down Lake Michigan to the "great white city." One is never out of sight of land during the journey; and to my mind, with the many ports and villages along the route, with fleets of sailing vessels coming and going, it affords more of interest and pleasure to the tourist than any other trip by water I have ever taken.

Of the several lakes Erie is best remembered, if traveled in a storm. A writer well describes it in these lines:

"She's shallow an' muddy an' mean,
She's chuck full of sandbars an' such,
She's pretty when ca'm an' serene,
But she's never that way very much.
You hardly kin sail by the chart,
Her shoals keep a-shiftin' around;
You'll think that you know her by heart
When—crunch! an' yer boat is aground.
She's blowsy an' bleary,
An' nasty, is Erie
An' allus just ripe for a squall;
She makes us all weary
An' ugly, does Erie,
The meanest old lake of them all."

Many of our passengers disembarked at Milwaukee, then a small cluster of low, wooden buildings and a stranger to beer. Chicago itself, hardly entitled to be called a city, was rushed with its carrying trade around the lakes.

I remember we secured a two-wheeled dray to transfer our baggage to a "hotel," distant a few hundred yards from the pier. En route on Clark street it got stuck in the mud, and was pried loose with rails from a zigzag fence on that street. Who shall say it was not Abraham Lincoln himself who with beetle and wedge mauled out those same rails, before he was even an humble lawyer?

The hotel proper, built of logs, consisted of several sleeping-rooms, and a sitting-room, dining-room and kitchen all in one. It was in the rear of a small grocery, through which the guests had to pass owing to knee-deep black mud on either side; and it was doing a flourishing business.

Between the hotel and the lake—a distance of about two hundred yards—there was only one building. Fancy a proud Clark street property owner of today admitting that such a condition existed on that great thoroughfare, or any other of Chicago's main streets, only sixty-five years ago or at any other time since the days of Noah!

We traveled via the Chicago & Northwestern railroad to its then terminus—the little village of St. Charles, on Fox river, ten miles from the present city of Elgin. That bit of road, mind you, was the only railroad west of Lake Michigan in the United States! It had no depot or other buildings. At Chicago it occupied for a freight yard an acre or more of prairie, without even a fence around it, piled with immense quantities of baggage, household goods and merchandise, destined for St. Charles and points beyond. The great rush "To the West!" was on.

Our journey to the wilderness ended in a lumber wagon ride to a farm about ten miles northwest of St. Charles. There was a small log house on it, occupied by the good-sized family of my uncle's sister. There being five in our bunch we had to hang on pegs, which stimulated my uncle to get another move on, in the same month. He rented a farm of a man who, lured by the gold lust of '49, started with his son for California overland.

Within a week I was set to plowing, with a pair of frisky three-year-old steers. My shoulders were not much higher than the plow handles; though the friable soil being without rock or other obstruction, the plow when started would run itself to furrow end. There trouble began, for it being double my weight, to set it in the next furrow taxed my utmost strength. Then when the steers had made a "bout" and the point was out, they had a playful way of lifting their tails and stampeding for a haystack several hundred yards distant.

I was kept at this soulful occupation for several weeks, until a considerable field had been turned over, during which there was no time to think of a gun or hunting, and I was more dead than alive with bruises and aching bones.

To mention all the "hired man's work" that was imposed upon me while I was on that farm would challenge belief. Think of any lad in his tenth year, and you will appreciate what my size and strength was, and the brutal cruelty of it all.

There was a public school house across the road from our place. Not for me—I didn't see the inside of it, except at a psalm singing one Sunday, with my uncle as leader. When it came to singing "Old Hundred," that man could stampede a jackass. He probably had prize material in him for a sky pilot's assistant, but on a farm there was little demand for his kind of talent. He would "putter" around the barn every day until after dinner, then with an old shotgun stroll out on the prairie. I never heard him shoot. If there was a scrub tree in his vicinity I expected to see him lying in its shade, asleep or watching me.

Soon an awful feeling of homesickness came over me. Sleeping or waking, it was ever present. Waking, I was thinking of the dear ones on the old farm and despairing of ever seeing them again. At night, after crying myself to sleep, with "Old Jack" for my companion I wandered through "orchard and meadow, and deep tangled wildwood," and drank from "the bucket that hung in the well."

One afternoon for some trivial thing my uncle punished me—with the toe of his boot. In kicking the little freckled, homesick lad, did he press the limit? He was soon given some reason to think so. When evening came, without waiting to "go after the cows" or my supper I hit the road. Not knowing where I was going I was sure on my way, running toward St. Charles. By 10 o'clock I had arrived there; and a kind landlord, after hearing my story and with doubled fists interviewing some black and blue boot prints, gave me a good supper and put me to bed.

It was not a restful night, for when dreaming I thought my uncle and his game eye caught up with and leered at me; and old Jack and I chased myriads of squirrels into holes and trees and lost them.

I was up at dawn—that being my time for turning out, or being thrown out. As I emerged from the inn door in the twilight I ran against a man, who proved to be my uncle. It was noticeable that "he seemed more in sorrow than in anger"—like he was about to break out with "Hark from the Tombs," or some other mournful favorite.

"Why did you leave home," he asked. "I've been riding over the country for you all night, until I came here."

"I've got prints of your boot on me, that's why, and I'll not stand it to be kicked by anybody any more," I said, beginning to cry. "My home is at Rochester, and there's where I'm going."

"But you can't travel so far without money, ragged and dirty. I've been thinking, and you must go with me now. Aunt is wild about you. In the fall, if you are a good boy, I will buy you new clothes and send you back to your guardian."

He was parleying, which made me brave as a sheep. A feeling had come over me that my ears were in no danger that morning of being twisted.

"Am I to be kicked any more?"

"I was very angry, my boy, or would not have done that."

"Did I deserve it?"

"I can say no, for I'm no longer angry, and glad to have found you, for your aunt's sake."

The landlord was standing in the door and overheard this conversation.

"Is this boy your nephew?" he asked.

"His aunt is my wife."

"I heard you say he would have to go back with you."

"Yes."

"He don't have to," and the fists doubled again. "If I had room for him he should not stir a step. If he goes back, you will have to get him some shoes."

"I have no money," my uncle sullenly answered.

"Then come in, both of you, have breakfast, and I'll see about the shoes."

When we had eaten the landlord took me to a store, from which I soon proudly emerged in red top boots and a pocket full of sweetmeats. As we were about to depart the landlord took my hand kindly and spoke words of encouragement. Then he turned to my uncle.

"I heard you tell the lad you would clothe and send him home this fall. Keep your word by October, or I'll be out your way with the sheriff, and you'll wish we hadn't come."

My uncle drove away without a word but a squint that boded me no good. When we reached the farm and the coast was clear, my aunt took me in her arms, kissed me and cried. Then she knelt and prayed that she might never do me a wrong; that I would always try to do right, and that my uncle might never be so harsh with me again. After that I knew she sympathized with me, which went a long way toward making me more contented. Though she had taken down the switch every day, it would have been all right. The work given me to do from this time was much lighter, and once I was actually allowed to go a fishing with a young lad. Previously I had not been permitted to play with other boys.

A couple of months later one morning my uncle told me to split some wood. There was a pile of dry knots in the yard at which I had been pecking all summer, until it seemed impossible with my strength to loosen another chip. When I told him so he flew into a rage, and seizing me by the hair again applied his cowhides to the locality where they had before left their marks. Then he mounted a horse and started for a nearby farm.

Did he ever see that erring, freckle-faced orphan again? Don't you think it.

My aunt was in childbed, helpless, so the get-a-way was easy. I cried half the way to St. Charles, for having to leave her without a kiss or parting word. But my teeth were set, and all the conceit the old crones had planted in my system was turned to nerve.

My good friend the landlord was glad to see me and said I should stay with him until he could get word from my guardian. This I would not listen to, afraid of another capture and surrender. On going to the depot and finding the one-train-a-day about to pull out, I went straight to the conductor and told him my story—rehearsed on the way—how I was an orphan, had been stolen, kicked and abused, and wanted to go to my home in York state. He not only put me on board, but gave me kind advice and some pennies; and so the little hobo was soon rumbling over the prairie, sorry to have left his landlord friend without a parting word but overjoyed with the thought that he was on the way.

It must have been 2 o'clock in the afternoon when the train pulled into Chicago. Here a temporary depot had been built, and conditions were otherwise so changed that I lost my way directly. My plan was to go to the lake front and get passage on some kind of vessel; for I knew no other way.

I had walked some time, and my courage was beginning to ooze, with now and then a tear trickling, when I met up with a benevolent-looking old gentleman walking with a cane and crutch.

"What you crying for, son?" he asked me.

"Nothing."

"Then why do you cry?"

"I was just thinkin'."

"What about? Maybe I can help you."

He finally pried it out of me that I had run away, and was on my way to my old home at Rochester.

"Well, for lands sake! You expecting to go there alone?"

"Yes, sir."

"Boy, don't you know Rochester is a thousand miles from here, and that it would be impossible for you to go so far? Why, you'd lose your way and never be heard of again."

"I'm going to try," I said, and was about to move on when he reached for my collar. As he grabbed, his crutch slipped and down he went. After running a few steps I looked back, fearing he had hurt himself. His face was very red, like he was angry at sitting down so hard.

"Here, you young scalawag, come back."

But I ran half a mile without stopping. After that I did not dare to ask questions, but bewildered and uncertain wandered on until I came to a high board fence, and climbed it to prospect. Seeing a smokestack and a vessel's rigging in the distance, I made for them at once.

The rest was easy. Never did good fortune come more opportunely to a friendless lad, save in story book, summoned by fairy's wand.

The smokestack was that of the propeller "St. Joe," bound for Buffalo. I went on board, and one of the sailors told me she was getting up steam, to cast off in a couple of hours. He pointed out the captain, a tall gaunt man with kindly eyes, whose face I had to look nearly straight up to see. Standing by the hatches he was busily checking the last of the cargo as it was being lowered. Men were tugging at boxes and bales, and there was such an uproar I despaired of his hearing my tale of woe, but repeated it loud and earnestly. I must have done myself credit; for after waiting a full minute, and when about backing up to go over it again, he suddenly doubled up until his face was within six inches of mine, and in a shrill voice shouted:

"What's that you say, you young rat?"

I was so scared I must have fallen into the hold but for his grabbing me. And I began to cry.

"There, sonny," he said, "don't do that or we'll have bad luck. See that gangway for'ard? Go down to the galley and tell the cook I said you are going to wash dishes this trip; and try to help him every way you can. Scud, now, for I'm busy."

So I was booked for Buffalo! Once there, I thought, home would be in sight. It proved to be different.

Before time for turning in that night the St. Joe was buffeted by a chopping sea, and a little land lubber had heaved his supper to the fishes of Lake Michigan. Sick as I was, the thought of how those people out on the prairie would marvel if they knew the boy who left them at 9 o'clock that morning was now aboard a steamer on its way around the great lakes. It had been really a wonderfully lucky trip. I had traveled less than seventy-five miles; but in that distance the chances were many to one of my meeting with obstructions to detain if not turn me back. The average person on meeting me would say, "It is my duty to stop this child and see him returned to his people." Nowadays, with boxcars and brakebeams everywhere, kids with eye-teeth cut make their way across the continent. Then it was rare for a boy to go five miles from home alone, and I certainly must have been the pioneer child hobo of that date.

The return lake trip made few impressions on me still remembered. I do not forget that, it being in the summer of 1849, everybody had the gold fever and all on board the St. Joe—captain, mates, crew and passengers—were humming snatches of California songs. The first lines of one favorite were:

"Meet me on the four square early in the morning,
For, oh, I'm off for California right away."

A comic one, very popular and not yet wholly extinct, began this way:

"I had a dream the other night
When all around was still,
I thought I saw Susanna bright,
A coming down the hill.
The buckwheat cake was in her mouth,
The tear was in her eye;
Says I, I'm going to leave you now,
Susanna don't you cry.
Oh, Susanna, don't you cry for me,
I'm going to California with
My wash bowl on my knee."

It was an agreeable variation from the incessant rolling and puffing of the old high-pressure propeller. The cargo was mostly baled cotton. There was a terrier, a cat and plenty of rats on board, and my recollection is that I spent more time chasing over the cotton and hunting rodents than in helping the cook. I made a number of figure-four traps, and caught so many of the creatures the sailors nicknamed me "Rat-catcher;" and as they were doing much damage, I got a nice compliment and a shilling from the captain.

As I awoke one morning the St. Joe was making fast to her pier in Buffalo. All on board being cheered by the prospect of soon going ashore, no one took notice of the little hobo, who left the gang plank without a parting word from any one. I was in a crying mood for it was a cold, rainy morning, all was strange and forbidding, and such a feeling of being deserted came over me I almost wished myself back where again could be heard my aunt's motherly voice. Then I seemed to hear a strain through the nose of "Hark from the Tombs," and it set my teeth again, all right.

My plan now was to find the Erie canal and a boat going to Rochester. When at length after much trudging I came to what was probably a branch like a railroad sidetrack, I found it blockaded with a long stretch of empty freighters, like strings of cars awaiting consignments. The sight must have given me the impression that the canal had gone out of business, for I resumed my wanderings and walked until I came to an immense building, which proved to be the New York Central depot. In front of it was a peanut stand, with the usual spread of nuts, fruits, stale cakes and candies, attended by a poorly-dressed, cross-eyed man with a wooden leg, whom I recognized as having once seen at the old farm. Cross-eyes and wooden legs are seldom forgotten. My, how my heart jumped! He was looking at me intently. I asked him if he had ever lived in Rochester.

"Yes."

"Were you at the Graham farm once for a load of potatoes?"

"Yes."

"Do you know Mitchell Loder, the lawyer?"

"Why, yes; and you are one of the Joseph Graham heirs?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where on earth have you come from? Run away? Somebody take your clothes away from you?"

Then I told him how I had just arrived that morning from Chicago, and why. He looked at me in amazement. After asking numerous questions he said:

"I'll fix it so you can go on the passenger at 5 o'clock. I live over there in that house," pointing to a low, mean-looking shack. "Go tell my wife I sent you to split some wood, and when you get through she is to give you something to eat; and be sure to be on hand when the train goes."

Taking advantage of a miserable little waif in the interest of thrift was not altogether unknown in that day and generation.

A sharp-faced, hawk-nosed woman met me at the door, and in answer to the message pointed to a pile of poles. I worked at them a long time, earned a square meal for a couple of hungry adults, and showing up again the old dame handed me a couple of cookies. My memory is very clear that there were just two of them, hard and gritty; and they looked like they had been used a long time on the peanut stand for flies to roost on. I gagged, even with my sailor's appetite.

At 5 o'clock the peanut man kept his word—fixed me, good and plenty. He told me to stand on the rear platform until the train started, and tell the conductor when he came around I had lost my ticket. I did not take to the plan, but thought it must be all right or would not have been told to do it. The conductor eyed me sharply, and without a word reached for the bell rope.

This was my first lie—on the trip. What an opportunity it affords me to moralize a little. My reflection is that had I told the truth, after my eventful journey thus far the conductor would gladly have helped me the rest of the way.

I was soon sitting by the track, at a barren place except there was a crossing and the old-fashioned sign, "Look Out for the Cars when the Bell Rings." It was my turn to cry again. I was sobbing bitterly, when a man with a dinner pail came along and asked what was the matter. I told him how I had been put off the train.

"Serves you right, my boy. You'd better go back to the city and try again tomorrow, when there will be another conductor. Tell him the truth and he may let you ride."

I told him I would rather sleep in a fence corner without my supper than go back to the peanut man; then asked him where was the wagon road to Rochester.

"This one here is the state turnpike, and goes directly there," he said. "I have to go two miles to my place, or you might stay with me tonight. Out east there a bit is a public house. They are good folks and will take care of you."

No turning back for me. After walking and running a couple of miles I came to a big white house, that I well remember because of its high Dutch gable. It proved to be a wayside inn kept by two elderly ladies, and might have been called the "Twin Sisters' Rest," the ladies looked so much alike.

There were no professional "tourists" in those days. Ways and means to combine and filch the hard earnings of common people and make hoboes of them had not been formulated. After listening to my story the ladies did not throw me out and set the dog on me. Dirty and "crummy" as I was, they hugged me and called me a "poor dear." Then I was stripped, scoured in a tub of hot water, searched with a fine-toothed comb, dressed in clean linen, feasted with fried chicken, and laid in a nice comfortable bed. My last remembrance of that night is that as I passed into dreamland, tired and worn, two good angels were kneeling at my bedside.

In the morning the good ladies proposed that I should live with them; said they would adopt me, put me in school, and in return I could be helpful to them. But this did not make me hesitate. So they gave me a bright red handkerchief filled with lunch, in a corner of which were tied four bright shilling pieces; kissed me and I went my way. In after years I often thought I would like to visit those kind-hearted women, but never found it convenient to do so.

I walked from the wayside inn to Ithaca, thirty-two miles from Buffalo, and the tramp occupied two days. It is still green in my memory that when stopping for food or rest I was not once plied with doubting questions or turned away. In fact, from the far-western prairie back to the old farm my only real setback was when I took counsel from the peanut man and lied to the conductor.

At Ithaca I was kindly cared for at the first hotel to which I applied, but not without questioning; for with a thousand miles of travel sans purse or scrip behind me, I was looked upon as a prodigy and crowds gathered to hear the story of my journey. One elderly, well-to-do gentleman, a guest of the hotel, became so interested that he also wanted to adopt me. He owned and operated a paper mill in a nearby village. Having no children, he and his wife lived alone. They would, he said, adopt me as their son. I could go to school, learn paper making, and if found worthy succeed him in the business.

Of course he could not interest the homesick boy—adding a gun, prairie chickens, rabbits and all kinds of snakes to his layout.

When I went to the depot there was a train on the track, about to pull out for the east. It was mostly made up of emigrant "empties." The Central at that time was rushed with freshly landed Irish, German and Dutch emigrants, bound for all parts of the known west, who have since been succeeded by generations numbered among the very best citizens of America. They were packed in cars resembling great red boxes on wheels, each car having on either side four windows a foot square, six feet from the floor. Train men who had to pass to and fro overhead were careful to walk in the center, lest the rich steerage aroma steaming from the little windows should overcome and topple them over. It was so rank as to make a gray brakeman out of a blue one in a few hours.

A big man with "fair round belly" and a double chin was pointed out to me as the conductor. He listened to me patiently, then bending down gave me a looking over and said kindly:

"My boy, I saw you at the hotel last night. I believe your story, and am going to let you ride. But listen: Just before the train pulls out be at the front end of that car—pointing to an empty. I will come and lock you in, and when we stop at Rochester let you out. In the car don't dare to make a noise, and don't try to look out of a window. Understand? You might get me into trouble."

"Yes, sir."

My next recollection is of standing at the corner of Buffalo and State streets in Rochester. The old farm, as I did not know then, or the way to it, was about two miles from the spot. After asking many times to be directed to "the Irondequoit road" (West North street)—no one knew it by that name—I had come to a standstill.

While taking in the noise and bustle of the city's main thoroughfare, confident that I would soon be on the way, my attention was attracted by loud laughter directly behind me. Turning, I saw standing in the entrance of a stairway my guardian uncle. He had recognized me. Holding out his hand I ran to him, and after wiping away tears of laughter he led me without a word up to his office. There in answer to questions I told him all that had happened, and other tears gathered in his eyes. Gently lifting me on to a table, he said:

"My son, stand right where you are until I come back. I won't be long gone."

The object he left standing there was about three feet high, marked with the intensely black hair of a "John Highlandman," Irish blue eyes, a very white, freckled skin—a heavy weight for my age. I had on a pair of well-worn red top boots with "italic heels," a pair of cast-off, full-grown trousers that had been cut off at the knees and were held up by one home-made suspender; a man's coat, with sleeves rolled to the elbows and tails long enough to reach the table but caught up here and there with pins and slivers; a boy's shirt that the good ladies had given me, and a chip hat, with the top gone and my unkempt long hair standing up through the crown.

Aside from the shirt, this was the rig in which I had started. Homespun, with long nap, while I was climbing over cotton bales on the St. Joe the coat and trousers had taken on a striking coating of cotton "feathers." I had "crums" enough to outfit a menagerie, and all I needed was a month's growth of whiskers and a tomato can to have taken the hobo prize.

Presently my uncle returned, followed by a dozen lawyers and doctors, tenants of the building.

"Gentlemen," said he, "let me introduce to you a young man who will some day be president. This is my nephew, just arrived from the wilds of Illinois, which he left two weeks ago and has made the whole distance alone and without a cent. He ran away from people there who stole him from me, because he wouldn't stand to be kicked."

Just imagine that while being inspected after that speech I was as proud as a pony in a circus.

What disappointment was awaiting me at the farm! After all, the magnet was not there. Everything was much the same, and my brothers and sister embraced me effectionately, and listened with wonder; but the boy, now more than a year older, did not hear with the same ears or see with the same eyes. The glamour of home scenes and the yearnings that were ever with me during the eventful year were gone, never to return.

A stern rebuke from my eldest brother,

who shortly received a letter from Illinois, for leaving my aunt as I had done, did much to dispel whatever was left of the ardor of my child longings.

I was never homesick again.

Undoing of Old Ormsby.

When in my 15th year I was apprenticed at typesetting to the Rochester (N. Y.) Advertiser. It was soon merged (I being a more or less valuable asset) with the Rochester Union—hence the present Union and Advertiser.

Tom Flannery was foreman of the hyphenated sheet. I would at this late date speak of him in a more respectful way, but do not know positively that his name was "Thomas." His besetting sin was playing favorites. All the favorites had to do to get his pie was to kowtow, in a low and contrite spirit. This I declined to do, though to make me come through he imposed on me shamefully, in various and sundry ways.

My work at case was a "stent" of 24,000 ems, at $2.50, after which I was paid for all I could set the regular scale—23 cents per 1,000—the total averaging about $4.50 per week.

One day when I had been rebellious Mr. Flannery went ahead of me to the copy box, and after pawing over the contents handed me a half column of solid reprint (as a rule all copy being leaded), with about every other line italic. It was a calm day, but suddenly he thought he saw a shooting star whizzing through space. It was a bright new shooting stick, that just grazed a bald place on his head. Then an object flew by him which proved to be the devil, making for the door with coat and hat in hand.

This incident explains why in 1857, at the age of 18 and with but two years' knowledge of printing, one bright day in June I showed up for subbing at the Cleveland (Ohio) Leader. I was put on that night by A. K. Cutting, and am particular to mention his name as this man some time later became one of the most notorious rat herders of the west and did serious mischief with his gang at St. Louis, Cincinnati, Chicago and other points.

The Leader force at that time, besides the foreman, consisted of six compositors. Cutting held the ad cases, and I will never forget that my first take was a half column display; for it was my first attempt at anything but straight matter. I got along with it very well, but not so well with the next—some unedited telegraph markets. Just fancy a reprint boy working as a journeyman on such stuff!

Through the patience and kindness of an alley partner, however, I saved my bacon and worked on the Leader several months.

A request came to the office one day for a printer to help out on the first number of a weekly paper, and I answered the call. The new publication was to be "The Spy"—a giveaway name though I was innocent as a babe of its meaning. Behind the enterprise was "Old Man" Ormsby, who after many years of progressive boozing had been fired from the foremanship of the Daily Herald for dropping a form and throwing an edition.

Casting about for something to do, Old Ormsby evolved the scheme of resuscitating a vile sheet called "The Spy," that had recently croaked when everybody thought it was coining money.

I must tell the cause of its untimely taking off, as it has a bearing on my story. An educated but devilish old dame, who had for many years been the managing director of a famous Cleveland maison de joie, having retired from active life with deep wrinkles, a cracked voice and little money, started the original paper and so filled it with double-edged personals that it became widely sought after. From her income she was soon enabled to array herself in fine linen and wear diamonds, even dabble in real estate; so that unsophisticated lookers on got the idea that the circulation of the sheet was something of a gold mine.

There were, however, many way-up men in that moral city—bankers, lawyers, doctors, even men of the cloth—who had grave reasons for suspecting that the mere selling of papers was a side-issue with the madam. Whenever the sheet contained a squib about the old maison in which the bare initials of one of these highly respected citizens appeared there was also a light in the window, and under cover of darkness he would make a sneak into the sanctum and sue for peace with a roll of bills.

One fatal week an item appeared containing a nasty thrust at a couple of frisky but not bad university boys. They were not of the breed to stand for blackmailing, and took sweet revenge. On the night of the day of publication, the coast being clear, they climbed through a back window and with hammers played a tattoo on the face of the forms. Even the heading was obliterated. About all the available type was inside the chases, and not one escaped. A new dress being necessary, and not knowing who had turned the trick and having a hunch it would be repeated or something as bad happen, the cute old dame not only concluded to go out of business, but incontinently went.

Old Ormsby's plant consisted of a couple of cases of "long primer," head letter, an inverted gravestone and chases. When I arrived I found the first and fourth pages of a five-column sheet made up with a spicy story. The old man showed me a hook full of locals and personals, set me to work and went and got drunk. That was the last I saw of him until the new "Spy'" made its first and only spiel.

How in my ignorance I got through that week, with never a soul coming near, don't matter much. Suffice it that the forms went to the press office Saturday morning. By 10 o'clock half-a-dozen newsboys were out picking up easy money. By noon I had taken in more "bones" than was my due.

Then a young fellow whom I knew, white with anger, entered the office.

"For heaven's sake, Jerry, what have you to do with this outfit?" were his first words. I told him all about it.

An anonymous letter had come to the office and being short of copy I inserted it. Darkly it criticised the actions of an estimable young lady, whose name I had given in full—instead of initials as Old Ormsby would have done. My friend pointed to the personal—evidently from a jealous rival.

"That is a dirty, lying slur on my only sister," he said. "I would not have her see it for the world. She is an invalid, and the shock of such an attack would kill her."

Then with a sudden frenzy, he exclaimed, "Watch me!" and before I could interfere overturned the case rack and shoved the unlocked forms off the stone. I was taking lessons very fast about this time in "the art preservative of all arts."

The fearful racket thus caused, on a hollow floor, was followed by a series of unearthly shrieks emanating from a store on the ground floor occupied as a gunshop. The place was being tended by a woman in a delicate condition, while her husband was temporarily absent. A gabble of female voices soon succeeded the screams, and it transpired that when the husband returned he found himself the father of a fine, bouncing boy.

My friend and I went down to the sidewalk, which was raised above the street level, just as Old Ormsby, with a big skate on was staggering up from the roadway. My friend hit him just once; and there was a sickening thud as he fell back in a heap and laid there.

I felt sorry for the old man, so the next day with another printer sought him out. His was the most startling pair of black eyes I ever saw. Compared with them a colored patch on a white vest wouldn't be noticed. He was standing by his gate, trembling from the debauch but sober, and beside him was his poor, devoted wife, with a hand on his shoulder and a far-away gaze. She looked to me like there wasn't a bite to eat in the house, so I slipped a small bank note into her hand.

When I said to him "Let's go and brace up," you ought to have seen that old man hike for a corner grocery near by. (In those days every well-regulated grocery had forty-rod on tap. It cost $3 and $3.50 a barrel and retailed at 3 cents a drink.) He had to rest his elbows on the counter while he lifted in a tumblerful.

That was the last time I saw Old Ormsby. I never even heard of him afterwards, but am fain to believe this enterprise compassed his last and only experience as an outputter of disreputable sheets.

Tribulations of a Two-Thirder.

The only time I ever played an engagement as a two-thirder was in the fall of 1858. I had just arrived in New York from Cleveland, with less than three years' experience at case, and was timid about showing up at the big newspaper offices. So I applied for work at John F. Trow's office, then on Broadway near Canal street, and was given cases on a city business directory. The measure was 10 ems, type 6-point; style included italic in nearly every line and blackface galore.

Trow's office, though the leading book and job office of the city at that time, employing twenty to thirty men, was conducted on the short-of-material plan, difficult to explain in these days of elaborate plants and type thoroughly sorted in the interest of economy.

Black face classification heads, occurring in every few lines in the directory, had to be set with half of the letters turned, and this was so also with the italic and black face body letter. My cases when given to me were level full with the exception of half-a-dozen empty boxes, while not a sort could be begged, borrowed or stolen. All I could do was to "dis" a couple of handsful and then set them out, using a rule without ears and a stick dating back to the time of the Dutch settlement.

At the end of the week, when I had up four galleys—not to exceed 20,000 at 20 cents per—I learned that the ghost walked but once in two weeks; and I owed $3.50 for board. Not a proof had been pulled, I was supposed to right the turned letters, and I foresaw it would take about half of the next week to get my little dab ready for the stone.

Nevertheless, I showed up Monday morning. Shortly after "time," while I was pounding away I saw something flash between my feet. It was a $2.50 gold piece. Quietly picking up some "feathers" I also picked up the money and put it in my pocket. Pretty soon came a weak-eyed fellow from the adjoining alley with a broom and stirred up a lot of dust under the racks, where a broom had not been in months, if ever. He said nothing to me but explained to my side-partner that he had dropped a small gold piece.

At that moment I was under a temptation born of desperation. I was broke, my landlady seemed to have talons like an eagle, and it was a cinch I could not last the week out with her. My sympathy has ever been with the poor, careworn boarding-house keeper who spends her time in the kitchen and lets the business end run itself. This was not one of that kind. No one delinquent could eat her head off. The sitting room was the front end of a double parlor with folding doors, and she occupied the back part. This latter was called by the guests the "drawing room," for behind its doors she drew money or blood from a delinquent. If blood, after the process he sneaked out of a side entrance and was seen no more.

One night I saw and heard something that made me feel awful. The doors swung open and there stood the landlady with eyes glaring, like a witch in Macbeth crooking her fingers at a poor devil, who looked like he would collapse as he answered the summons. The lovesick girl ceased singing "Only Thou," the game of four-handed cribbage suspended, the gabble ceased, and a death-like silence ensued except that the children began to cry. Then a shrill, high-keyed voice prevailed in the drawing room for about fifteen minutes, the side door opened and closed, and all was still again save for hysterical sobs from within. Next? Not me.

There were a number of favorites in the office including the fellow who dropped his coin. During lunch hours I had visited his frame and seen that he was working on an edition of Shakespeare, set in 6-point, with 2-point leads. To make me jealous, I presumed, he informed me he had been working for more than a year on like matter—editions of Burns' and Byron's works, etc. To me he was a bloated coupon cutter. Securing his address from the office register, I resolved to keep the godsend until I could make some money and return it.

That night I appealed to a benevolent brakeman on the Hudson River Railroad, and started in a freight car for my home at Rochester. On the trip my chief amusement was making calculations on about how much John F. Trow would be ahead if a time hand corrected my week's work.

Some time later, when I was burning midnight oil, "a student o'er the dreams of sages," a copy of that identical Trow edition of Shakespeare fell into my hands. It was a neat, gilt-edged volume, finely printed; but I could take no comfort conning its pages because of a piece of money, that, like Macbeth's dagger, cavorted around and obscured the pages. Though my conscience was relieved, after diligent search for that address it transpired that I had lost it, and the wrestler of fat matter never recovered his wealth.

* *

During my "engagement" at Trow's the misery was not constant, thanks partly to my last fifty cents.

A typesetting machine being operated in the office so challenged my curiosity that I spent lunch hours watching its movements. Three men and a boy were required to run it—the product of their labor being about 6000 per hour of "small pica"—11-point. There was a hopper-like receptacle for each type, from which they were released by means of a keyboard into slots that met at a common center. Here they were dropped by a peculiar device feet first on an endless tape, which carried them to a galley-like contrivance also moved by the keyboard, on which they fell through a groove face and nick up, in single file. When the galley was full it was replaced mechanically with an empty one. Then with stick and rule a man proceeded to break up the long line into lines of any required measure.

If you should want to know how the types were taken down, and so placed in the hoppers that they could with accuracy be freed one at a time, don't ask me, for it was a secret I did not find out. It may be this machine was tried first and last at Trow's, for I never saw or heard of it afterwards. It was certainly an ingenious piece of mechanism, since it actually set real type faster than it can be done by hand.

⁂

The first steam fire engine ever seen in New York was exhibited on Broadway near Trow's while I was there. It was invented and made in Chicago, but I do not recollect the name of it. Great crowds witnessed its operation. Strangely, it did not seem to particularly attract the attention of hand machine firemen. They little dreamed that the old hand engine, of which there were scores in the city manned by companies of 100 to 300 men, would give way to steam power and soon become relics of the past.

The great volunteer companies of the larger cities of those days had to be reckoned with by politicians and place hunters. The political party standing in with the majority of them usually won out. But as the big companies were intensely jealous of each other, especially of the relative merits of their engines, it was difficult to herd them in the same political corral; so that the power they could have wielded was often lost. It was just as well, for the membership was largely made up of "plug uglies," as the bruisers were called, and questionable characters. A state firemen's tournament, at which prizes were given for the highest streams of water thrown, was considered one of the biggest entertainments with which a city could be favored. The companies were on their good behavior under penalty of being barred, but all the same, as during the visitation of a circus, the citizens prudently remembered to fasten their doors and windows.

The company called "Big Six," manning a double-decker engine and able in an emergency to summon 300 men to the drag ropes, always came out ahead in a fight, in which whole companies would engage. No other engine could take the water of "Big Six" and stay with it. Each man carried a hook in his belt, as did most other firemen for that matter. When two engines were about to pass each other on a cobble pavement the ropes were dropped and every man dug up a cobble stone with his hook. Then they resumed the ropes and the long files sullenly moved on. If one stone was thrown it was the signal for a melee, and the harvest would often be a dozen broken heads, sometimes fatalities. The spirit prevailing among firemen was well expressed at a meeting of "Big Six," when the subject of repainting the engine was under discussion. Motions had been made favoring different colors, when a member in a back seat arose and said:

"Mr. Chairman, fer me, I don't care what color de macheen am painted so long as its de color of blood."

It is worthy of recalling that when volunteer fire departments fairly dominated the larger cities, staid old Philadelphia was credited with having the banner fighting department, while Baltimore lined up as a close second.

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Just below Canal street on Broadway was a large public hall, so in disuse as to have been almost forgotten, when one morning its former prominence was suddenly recalled by an immense streamer stretched across the street in front, bearing the figure of a beautiful mermaid. The picture was quite a work of art; must have cost hundreds of dollars. It having been profusely announced by the press and flaming posters that P. T. Barnum, at great expense, had brought from

Japan the only mermaid ever landed on American soil, and would exhibit it at this hall, when the doors were thrown open thousands of people fairly fell over each other to get front seats at fifteen cents each, and I was in the crush. Behold, there were no seats, front or back, and not a sign of any kind of furniture except in the center of the vast room was a small table. On this table stood a glass globe about eighteen inches high, in which, fastened to a pedestal, was about as disgusting an object as I ever saw. It was the head (sans eyes), arms and trunk of a dried monkey, to which some Jap had attached the tail of a fish, so ingeniously that close inspection could not detect just where they were joined. It took about a minute to view the layout, everybody turning away with a broad grin that lasted into the open air—verifying Barnum's famous comment that the American public likes to be humbugged.

I was one of the first victims. The attraction lasted nearly a week, during which the greatest of showmen salted away many thousands of dollars. On the last afternoon, when the attendant had been called away a moment, some joker raised the case and stuck a cigar stub in the "mermaid's" mouth. Perhaps this was taken as a hint that the public had been sufficiently worked for once—that the big grin was about to make way for a big growl—and the show closed.

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One night I was permitted to mingle with "the gods" at Laura Keene's theatre, where "Our American Cousin" was having its first great run. It was one of the cherished privileges of my life to see on this occasion the original great cast—including Laura Keene, Joe Jefferson, the elder Sothern and Burnett. Sothern, peaked at having been assigned an insignificant part, had put his soul into it, given it a conception entirely his own, and already made Lord Dundreary the talk of the city.

As will be remembered, it was while witnessing this play (with the same cast) that seven years later President Lincoln was assassinated in Ford's theatre at Washington.

New York Herald Office Fifty Years Ago.

Looking backward fifty years, the up-to-date printer and machine man can hardly conceive of the amount of labor, the skill and clocklike regularity that were essential in producing the high-class eight-page metropolitan dailies of those times. For, while improvements have been made that it would now be impossible to get along without—such as the linotype, the perfecting press, the stereotyped page, and lightning methods of illustration—there were dailies of the fifties that in my judgment were artistically and mechanically superior to some of the top-heavy, yellow sheets of the present rating as first class. A twelve-page edition then was more difficult to produce than forty-eight pages now.

Take the New York Herald, for example. It began publication in 1836 with four pages, four twelve-inch columns to the page. Twenty years later it was printing eight seven-column pages, and a little later special editions of twelve pages were made possible by the Hoe six-cylinder press—a marvel of "speed"

—and noise. Before the civil war ended the Herald had two ten-cylinder presses in commission, with which it distanced all competitors by printing editions of as high as thirty-two and even forty pages. In the fifties the news was set in "nonpareil," ads. in "agate" and editorials and Sunday stories in "minion." All ads. began with a two-line initial and first line in caps. The only display permitted was caps and broken lines. Such a thing as a two-column ad. was an unheard-of abomination, and would have been an outrage on all accepted rules of typography. When the double-column ad. was first "evolved" it read across two columns, but the full column rule had to go in just the same. Not a lead or slug was allowed in advertising. If a patron wanted "a spread" he could pay for as many three em dash lines, or "miseries," between lines as he liked; or he could repeat lines any number of times.

Repeating was a favorite display used by Doctor Helmbold, of buchu fame—the greatest advertiser of his time except P. T. Barnum. Once he proposed to fill the first page of the Sunday Herald with "Helmbold's Buchu——is an——Unfailing Remedy——for——Kidney Troubles"

—each broken line to be in caps, thirty times, with a three-em-dash line between, to make a column—the next column the same, and so on, making a page of solid agate type. What resulted illustrates the severe rules the Herald management was obliged to enforce. At 2 o'clock Saturday the doctor applied for the space and cost. He was informed that the price for one issue would be $1,250, but that he would have to wait until 4 o'clock before the advertising could be accepted. "What," he shouted, pompously, "do you mean to intimate that Doctor Helmbold's advertising may be declined? I propose to occupy the first page tomorrow if I have to pay $2,000 for it." Being informed by the manager that the mere matter of pay cut no figure—that the advertising space was already well filled with regular and small ads. (a twelve-page edition being the limit at that time)—the doctor smoothed his feathers. His ad. did not appear.

There were forty-eight piece cases on the Herald in 1858, besides ship-news, market and head departments. The price for composition was 33 cents—fair considering that in many interior cities like Cleveland, Buffalo, Rochester and Albany but 20 to 25 cents was paid. The up-country price for tolerable board and room was $2.50 while in New York it was around $3.50 per week. A fair suit of "hand-me-downs" could be had for $9 to $12. My judgment is that 33 cents then was better than 55 now; for board, lodging and quite glad togs complete, with an assortment of 3-cent slugs of booze on the side, could be paid for with a ringer. The average string was about nine thousand—nearly $21 for a full week.

But say, what do you fellows who drop your sticks in the middle of a line when the eight-hour jig is up know about work? Let me tell you about the real thing. A slave representing cases on the old Herald had to show up at 11 in the morning. That was an unwritten law, that needed no frowning monarch to enforce. There were preliminary bouts before distribution requiring attention. You applied to the stoneman, who handed you a galley of nonpareil and another of agate or agate and minion mixed. No need to handle them carefully, for you could throw a whole column across the office and hardly jar loose a "feather." The type had been locked in turtles and soaked to the last nick with ink as thin as was possible to use—for the presses had to fly to cover the big editions .

Resting a galley on his case, the printer first loosened up the type a little with a wooden "masher" (built something like a potato masher), by lifting slightly several lines at a time, between the thumb and finger, and manipulating them with the masher—a tedious process. The galley, which was of lead and locked with lead side-stick and quoins, was then taken to a tank fifty feet long, which contained lye to a depth of about four inches and was a general depository for all hands—each slugging his galleys, noting their relative position and allowing them to soak for one day. Galleys deposited the previous day were then taken out, and after a thorough rinsing, were ready for distribution. Working in the lye gave one's nails a chronic "Chink" tint.

At 1 o'clock typesetting was begun, that is, by one-third of the gang, which was divided into three phalanxes—the second one beginning at 2, the third at 3, and each working two hours. At 3 the first division would resume distribution, which the third would complete before composition. Thus, by 5 o'clock, six hours had been put in on each case. From 5 to 7 was given to rest and refreshment, during which many were prone to catch an hour's nap. Then began the sure-enough day's work, a steady pull of at least seven and often nine hours, barring half an hour for lunch at low 12, when "Old Wheezy Jane," carrying a corpulent basket and a tank of hot coffee, would come staggering up and nearly fall dead on the fifth landing—for the elevator had not then been thought of, or even dreamed of.

There was little richness in the way of fat takes and premiums. Ringers were the exception. The stayer who could put in two weeks in succession was tough. There were several iron men who could stand it to stay three and even four straight weeks. But when they "fell," it was for a month's booze at least.

No one familiar with the routine of a morning daily marveled at the proverbial dissipation of the old-time printer. He came from under the hot gas-light in the morning, exhausted and pale as a church bedbug. No wonder his coppers got hot pretty often. He needed rest, but was prone to substitute stimulants and forget the downy couch.

In the Herald the "ghost" walked Saturdays, exactly at high 12. By low 12, probably not less than sixty per cent of those not working were well jagged up while the workers, largely subs., lifted a few on the way home.

The hundreds of subs. who sojourned around "Printing House Square," where were most of the daily offices, were jokingly divided into three grades, called the first, second and third boards. Members of the first were reliable, the seconds were all right if sober, while no recognized third-boarder would sully his reputation by showing up so long as he knew where he could get another beer, and the regular who put him on was held responsible if his cases went dark.

* *

Speaking of dark cases reminds me of some funny incidents. Vacating cases without permission meant discharge without notice. One night an "old standby," who had taken some too many, tried to beg off, saying he wouldn't be as good as a wooden man. Being told that every case had to be represented that night, if only by a stick of wood, he stood a piece of cordwood against his rack, turned on the gas and lit out. When the foreman came around and saw the "wooden sub," he grinned a grin that meant that the ruse had won.

Another of the boys who made the

ancient excuse, said he might as well be dead for all the good he could do, but was handed the ultimatum that some one alive or dead must be on his cases. He went into the street, and, hailing a green Irishman, asked him if he wanted to make a dollar.

"Sure," was the reply.

Mike was piloted to No. 17, shown how to hold the stick, told to imitate the motions of his neighbors whenever the boss came around, and a piece of dead manuscript was laid on the case. After awhile his peculiar movements attracted the notice of the foreman, who asked him what was the matter.

"Well, sor," replied Mike, "it's a hen must-a done that writin' wid her two feet."

The trick was so nervy that nothing came of it, but, a little later, another philosopher who tried it hit the pave.

* *

The Herald for many years occupied a five-story building and basement at the corner of Nassau and Fulton streets. In 1867 it removed to a handsome structure, built expressly for its use, on the corner of Ann and Broadway, in the same block, the site having been made vacant by the burning of Barnum's museum. This fire destroyed what was no doubt the largest and most valuable exhibition of curios ever seen in this country, up to that time, P. T. Barnum having spent large sums and much of his life in collecting them. They crowded five stories of a great building, and burned like tinder. I am about to relate some incidents connected with this fire, but, in passing, should mention that quite a number of years ago the Herald moved up town to its present location, at about Thirty-third and Broadway.

When time permitted, the Herald printers were wont to repair to the roof of the old office for a bit of fresh air. One morning about 11 o'clock several of us who had gone to the roof noticed dense smoke issuing from a small restaurant occupying the inside (Ann street) corner of the museum building, where we often went for lunches. This restaurant was noted for having folding doors opening into the museum for the convenience of the "fat lady," who hit the beam at 550 pounds, more or less; also, for a prodigious bench, built of two-inch oak plank, expressly for the lady's use.

When she dined a crowd was attracted; but the smoke that morning proved a better drawing card, for, in a minute an excited mob blocked Ann street. We made a rush for the pavement, though by the time we arrived it seemed like the whole building was in flames, so dry and inflammable were its contents.

I elbowed my way through Fulton to Broadway, where the heat was so fierce that the crowd, packed like sardines in a box, had to back down to the next corner. Here a cry suddenly arose that the lions, tigers and big snakes had escaped from their cages and were loose on Broadway.

Talk about a stampede—you ought to have seen that mob getting away, with my hat, coat tails and temper. Directly ahead of me was a handsome, richly dressed young woman, held a prisoner by the crush. A big brute of a fellow had jammed one of his feet through her dress and tilting hoops (they were a la mode), and she was borne to her knees. In a minute she would have been trampled to death, but I had the presence of mind to grab her around the waist, and tearing her loose by main strength, I carried her along until the rush subsided.

Without even a hat with which to shade my eyes, I then had to take notice that about all she had on was a neck ribbon and shoes. I wrapped my coat around her, though it wasn't much good with the tails gone. A "cop" helped me to put her in a cab, and took her home.

. I was painfully modest in those days, or this might have proved the beginning of a life romance. I never saw nor heard of the girl again.

James Gordon Bennett, Sr., in his declining years was generous, but irascible and sharp after what was legitimately his due. In these qualities he had none the best of Phineas T. Barnum, who prided himself on being "the czar of all the showmen," which he truly was, and as such courted acknowledgment. Because of adverse criticism or some business disagreement, a war to the knife broke out between the two, and for a long time the latter not only did not patronize the Herald, but over announcements in other papers printed the legend, "Barnum's does not advertise in the New York Herold."

This fight was on when the museum burned. While the ruins were still smoking Mr. Bennett fell in love with the site and determined, if possible, to secure it. Negotiating with his arch enemy being out of the question, he employed a discreet agent, who effected the purchase. The price paid was said to be $1,100,000, about $1,000 per front inch on Broadway. Mr. Barnum was really delighted to get rid of the ground, as it was no longer good for his business, the residence portion of the city having started on its travels up town; but when he learned that the canny old Scotchman of the Herald was its real purchaser, his wrath knew no bounds. He tore his hair, it was said. The longer he brooded over it the madder he got, and his critics were mean enough to say the incident soured the rest of his life.

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Among Herald "notables" during my time Superintendent Wm. Smythe was in the lead. During business hours he was "Mr. Smythe," strictly on his job, and knew nobody. Out with the boys until daybreak, he was plain "Bill," wanting to fight the man who called him "Mister," was hale fellow well met with us all, and never missed a "straight." At peep of day he would go to sleep in a chair backed up against the wall, sit one hour, then perform his morning's ablutions, drink a cup of black coffee, and show up at his desk bright as a dollar.

Then there was Dick Kimber, very old and peevish but digging at case for a 4,000 string, who in 1836 made up the first forms of the Herald; Jack Watson, with "fair round belly with good capon lined," whom we called "Jack Falstaff," for he took in hand every new "Prince Hal" who came to the chapel and graduated him as a rounder; "Old Fegee," a reformed sailor, who was shipwrecked many times and for years marooned on a South Sea island; Bill Leaning, with a record of setting on a fifty-dollar bet 125,000, regular hook copy, in seven days regular time—the average string having been not more than 60,000.

With a question mark I shall always recall "Slug 11" because it was represented by an odd genius, who lives in my memory as a mystery. In the office we became quite chummy, and I had reason to feel he was square and true. I do not remember to have ever met him outside of the composing room, or of knowing him by any other name than "Speck"—presumably a nickname, as his face was a mass of freckles. He was a skinny little fellow, weighing not more than 120 pounds, and I remember among his other oddities that when at case he habitually wore a red handkerchief tied loosely about his neck.

One day he told me in strict confidence that he came from a noble English family; that when a youth he was obliged to fly from home and native land for killing a man, and that some time with more leisure he would tell me all about it—but never did.

At this late day, with my eye teeth cut and gone, I am inclined to believe this burst of confidence was a creation, out of which he got more or less quiet enjoyment. But I am now betraying it, mystery or no mystery, for the first time.

"Speck" usually worked a week, then was off a week or ten days. It's a cinch that while away he indulged in a weakness for "nose painting;" for when he came on the fine, aquiline handle to his face was always very red, while other features to the back of his neck had a tint of the same—something between the rich brown of a ham and a sunset glow. Another indication was that for the first two or three days he was very nervous, blue and irritable.

His cases were next to the dump. When some other bundle of nerves pied a line in emptying, Speck would jump, may be pie one himself, and yell "Chick, chick, chick! give 'em water and clean the coop!"—or something like. When occasionally a whole stickful was pied, he nearly landed with his feet in the space box, figuratively speaking. "My God!"

he would shriek, "why didn't you tie a string around it? Somebody get the dish-pan and a broom! Was your necktie in it? Call the cops."

These outbursts, often several times of a night, furnished plenty of amusement, and mingled with his naturally genial disposition made him popular.

Recently an account of the death of "Speck" White (otherwise Arthur Fennel White) was published. In a sense it was meet that my dear old Speck should have been named "White," for being at times very red and very blue, his "banner" would thus have represented all of the national colors.

He died at New Haven, Conn., where he had spent some of his later years, and is credited with having written the following appeal for forgiveness when he knew there were but a few weeks for him to live—

"I ask forgiveness for none of the deeds or misdeeds of my charity syndicate, but for one thoughtless act. I feel and have always felt extreme sorrow for my Boston transgression of the live codfish eyeball, which in my trembling right hand I showed in sorrow, with a red handkerchief over my good eye, to Boston tight-wad printers to raise the wind when all else had failed. In honor the Boston Herald chapel raised $60 for a new eye. I had plenty of eyes, except red eyes, so I transferred the appropriation to the department of ways and means; and was by this overt act ostracised from the city of beans and intellectuality. I ask Boston's forgiveness. I was never proud of the experience. It was the most remarkable piece of panhandling of ancient or modern typographical history."

I believe my dear old Speck of the Herald had the genius and nerve to turn a trick like that. The Boston Herald chapel should now have the further charity to resolve that he was merely the victim of an uncontrollably playful nature, and let it go at that.

In the Early Sixties.

The glamor that lingers around tales of the diggings days of California and trials and struggles which beset most of the argonauts in journeying thither makes them of abiding interest.

I was not a 49er, nor yet a 59er, am not a past master at story telling, and have no hair-raising incidents to relate, yet trust this sketch of a trip to San Francisco in the near early days and my experiences enroute and on the coast may not lack in interest.

Leaving New York City in the latter part of November, 1860, I passed through the Golden Gate via Panama some days before Christmas. Having reached New York from Rochester but a couple of hours before the steamer North Star was to cast off for Aspinwall (now Colon) I had to hustle. Including several companies of soldiers and their officers over twelve hundred passengers were booked, and every berth was taken. Rather than wait two weeks for the next steamer, I decided to take chances—bought a second cabin ticket and went aboard.

Hand baggage, boxes and bundles were so piled up in the cabins it was some time before I could find even a seat. Time for "turning in" having arrived without any regular movement being made to straighten things out I began to be fidgity, and taking a flask from my grip was about to "brace up," when a waiter hove in sight. At a glance he had been on a big skate—looked awful shaky and despondent. The thought struck me I might turn Good Samaritan and profit by his misery.

"Hello, Jack," I hailed. "What's gnawing? You look like you are about all in."

"You've got me. I'd give my interest in heaven for something to steady my nerves, and can't get a sup aboard this ship. There's strict orders at the bar not to let any of the help have liquor, and it's a 'fire' to panhandle a passenger."

"Then it's lucky I hailed you. Here's a bracer, right now, in spite of the regulations."

He snatched the bottle, but after a long pull was profuse with apologies and thanks.

"Never mind that stuff," I said. "But see here, I haven't even a berth—all sold before I got my ticket. When you can, clear a sofa for me so I can lie down. At midnight hail me for another lifesaver, and in the morning I'll fix you again. Meanwhile keep your eye skinned for a vacant berth, overlooked. I'll give you $5 for one."

I got the sofa and a blanket, all right. Trust to Jack's not forgetting the midnight appointment. As he turned away he said:

"I'll do the very best I can for you tomorrow, never fear. There'll be rough weather before morning. A sou'easter has struck us. If you don't want to be sea-sick, take brandy at short intervals. It's a preventive, though I'd advise you to let nature take its course—you'll feel better afterwards."

I took the brandy, and was not sick that night or during the voyage, with the result that for three months I had little taste and no appetite. The sea had turned me upside down and so left me.

The next day, thanks to Jack, I was located in the lower berth of a hurricane deck stateroom—a $225 layout, as against my $150 second-class passage. I gratefully tendered Jack the $5. He looked insulted. A tip didn't fit the case, as he saw it. It is such a pity that his breed of waiters, like the dodo, is now extinct.

"You must take me for an ingrate," he said. "You saved my life last night, for I'd a died afore morning. If there's anything else I can do for you, jog me."

After "morning mess" I took a stroll on the main deck and brought up at the steerage, where the many third-class passengers were adjusting themselves to the discomforts and not many comforts of roughing it at sea. Happily for them this trip was to end in eight days, when transferring by railroad across the isthmus to the Pacific steamship at Panama would afford a twenty-four hours respite from the aching monotony of a cramped existence.

One cannot be long among the lowly on a crowded ship without meeting with conditions appealing to his sympathy. One of the most pitiful sights I ever witnessed was on this morning—a group consisting of a mother traveling alone with her six little children, all seasick and the mother too ill to care for twin infants at her breast. All the women near her needing attention themselves, I was one of a committee of three to do what could be done to make this family comfortable. Altogether, we were not as efficient, I am afraid, as one "Mark Tapley," but we did the best we could, and

I still see the look of gratitude with which the poor woman repaid us.

I was leaning against the side rail reaching for a breath of fresh air, when a funny thing happened in proof that I was not the only nervy wayfarer getting the best of the steamship company. Standing beside me was a buxom woman in tilting hoops—fashionable in those days. Her dress was spread out over four feet of the deck, forming a canopy like a circus tent in miniature. By her on the other side was a runt of a fellow, whose head barely reached her shoulder. He was stocky, and must have been broken off too high up for his feet were abnormally great. As the purser and ticket takers came along there was a lightning consultation between the two, then the little man suddenly ducked and disappeared. The men were inspecting the woman's ticket when a lurch of the vessel threw one out of balance and his feet went under the tent and on to a pair of No. 12 cowhides.

"Pardon me, madam," he said good naturedly, "I reckon you'll be able to go ashore without assistance. You'll have to take a reef in them feet, if you don't want 'em stepped on."

So the little man made his ruse work, for that time; but he was not solid, ha ing yet to pass the isthmus railroad conductor and the Pacific steamship purser.

Those huge skirts were the most abominable fashion of the nineteenth century, yet this incident illustrates that for utility, compared with the present-day hobble, they had a redeeming quality for wearers who wanted to secrete things. Shoplifters and such, by attaching hooks to their hoops, could hide and walk off with enough plunder to stock a small variety store.

From a lively crowd on the North Star I singled out three pretty good singers for running mates, and we organized a quartet that was soon popular. They were M. B. Whittier, a gaunt six-footer from Rhode Island (a cousin of the poet Whittier) whose ship name was "Yank;" "Delaware," a sailor with beady black eyes and a wicked-looking knife in his vest, who only held a place in my esteem by having a fine voice; "Tex," (from Texas), and "Bowery"—myself, so-called to distinguish me from "New York," also hailing from the big city.

We were up in a number of popular selections. On fine moonlight nights, with the deck crowded with promenaders and groups of sitters, including the military officers and their wives, except for the laboring of the machinery stillness prevailed when we rendered this favorite sea song of the time—

THE BUCCANEER'S BRIDE.

Away, away,
O'er the boundless deep,
We'll merrily, merrily roam;
Come, Anna, break
The mermaid's sleep,
With the song of your seagirt home.

I'll make thee queen
Of a brighter scene,
Where no chilling winds are known;
Where the dark-eyed maid,
'Neath the palm tree shade,
Sings sweet of her island home.

On the deck they stand,
My gallant band,
To guide thee, love, over the sea,
To the spicy isles,
Where the bright sun smiles
In golden beams for thee.

Bring flowers with thee,
And my heart back to me,
Oh come when the seabird calls;
But at anchor we'll ride
For the buccaneer's bride,
Till the dew on the twilight falls.

The serenaders rarely ended an evening without an invitation to cake and wine at some of the officers' quarters, and even resolutions were drawn thanking us for our efforts to lessen the listless hours.

No pleasure trip could now be so inviting to me as a run down to and across the isthmus once more—especially since the marvellous canal has added additional attractions. Yet it is a question if the primeval conditions which the hardy '49ers overcame before the railroad was built—making the journey across to the Pacific in rude boats on the Chagres river, and eke on mules and burros through tropical jungle and morass—would not far more attract the old adventurer to a review of those early scenes than any triumph of modern engineering. The early days and their almost impossible trails are gone, while engineering skill and money will succeed to a greater triumph when the Nicaragua canal is built—which it will be.

A ride across the isthmus by railroad in the sixties is remembered by those who made it as an intensely interesting experience. It was fresh in the minds of travelers of those days that the isthmus road was completed at an awful sacrifice of human life and an immense outlay of treasure. A considerable part was built through dreadful swamps, on piles and bridges chaining one sunken mountain with another, and at times laborers from New York and other parts fell victims to the Panama fever at the rate of nearly a shipload a day. Those who went to work bade good bye to comrades left behind, not expecting to return. It was asserted and believed that every tie in the road represented a dead man's bones. White men, West India islanders and Chinese at length refused to be lured to almost certain death by the big pay offered and the enervated natives, who had never before seen a shovel or a wheelbarrow, were finally employed to complete the undertaking.

The scenery through which the road passes, strange to northern eyes and bright with tropical foliage, was deeply interesting, yet I could not lift my thoughts from the dreadful slough of death over which we were passing.

Compared with this route the one used in those days via Nicaragua was longer, and in places fatiguing, but many preferred it on account of its lower temperature, healthier climate and grander scenery. From the Atlantic side, except in very dry seasons, we could travel from the Carribean sea up the Rio del Norte by flat boat to Lake Nicaragua, there taking steamer for a 100-mile trip nearly to its northwestern end. The lake and its surroundings presents a marvel of grandeur and beauty. It is hemmed in by mountain peaks and ridges, and contains many islands, on one of which—Zapatra—is a monolith bearing mystic hieroglyphics—a silent witness to the presence there in the distant past of an enlightened race. In the midst of a cluster of islets, many in number, the volcano of Mombacho lifts its smoking peak. The altitude of the lake, which is forty miles in width, is 110 feet above sea level, suggesting that some day this body of water may become a source of tremendous power for industrial uses. From the lake to the little land-locked harbor of San Juan del Sur, was a tedious mule-back journey.

This reference to the once famous Nicaragua route, by which I later traveled, is made partly as a prelude to a little anecdote that will bear telling.

Along in the fifties "Miser Eli," a New England farmer, left the diggings at Bidwell's Bar girt in a capacious belt, said to have contained $6,000 in golden double eagles. He must have been a powerful man if he walked off easily with such a load, but when it came to money it was said his lust for it would have enabled him to pack a ton. Miser Eli was pusilanimously mean, and when starting for home the Bar boys figured he ought to have had for his motto, "Git thar, Eli, without dropping a short bit on the way."

Instead of turning over his gold for exchange at a Frisco bank, he reckoned it would be safer and cheaper to take it with him.

Arriving in due time at Nicaragua lake, instead of taking passage on the regular steamer for San Juan river, to save $5 he sailed on a schooner. There was a stiff breeze, and he was sitting on deck enjoying an old pipe, the scenery and thoughts of soon seeing the home in Vermont, when the schooner suddenly tacked, the boom swung around and in a twinkling Eli, his precious belt, hopes and pipe were swept overboard.

The captain noted that for a moment a few bubbles marked the spot where he disappeared, in water of unknown depth. No one could have found the exact spot again, or as suggested by the Bar boys, a buoy might have been anchored there bearing this legend:

"Days, months, years and ages shall circle
away,
And yet the vast waters above thee shall
roll,
Earth loses her pattern, forever and aye—
Oh, Eli boy, Eli boy, peace to thy soul."
(Slightly altered.)

Leaving New York in the edge of winter and landing eight days later in the edge of spring was like being translated from mid-winter to mid-summer, only more so, as Aspinwall was but 7½ degrees from the equator and its coolest weather too warm for comfort. We stepped out of a foot of snow in New York, while attending our landing was the incessant droning of insects, in an atmosphere "heavy with sighs from sweet orange groves" and the odors of tropical foliage and flowers.

Aspinwall on "steamer days" was a red hot town in more ways than one. At other times I imagine it lolled in the shade, too lazy to eat—the only subject for thought being the probable "catch" from the next arrival. Incoming steamers always found it in holiday attire by day, and brilliantly lighted by night. All its nets were set and lines baited for suckers.

We went ashore at 8 in the evening. Yank and I, electing to take in the sights, deployed as a guide an old native, dark as Erebus. There was really not much to interest us, though at the end of our tramp we were witnesses in a case of tropical punishment for drunkenness, that for effectiveness was a revelation and more simple and less fussy than our justice court methods. Our guide, after pocketing his peso, threatened to quit if we did not treat him to aquadente every time we passed a bar. That being very often, he soon became too heavily laden to pursue a bee line. Suddenly a couple of native policemen seized and laid him not very gently on the walk, face down. Then stripping his ebony form from waist to knees, they fanned him vigorously with ratans, which at every stroke left a white streak and elicited a grating of teeth. When told to go, he "stood not upon the order of his going" but went as the crow flies. The police said it was their way of treating such cases, and the culprit seldom came back for more.

My breakfast was a meal long to be remembered, mostly for what I did not eat. On turning a coffee cup that had probably been inverted since the last steamer day I found that a colony of minute red ants had pre-empted it for a hive. The disgusting sight of them temporarily weaned me from my favorite beverage. Then I inspected a fricasseed chicken wing. The cook had neglected to remove feathers on the under side, and they were the exact color of an immense buzzard that just then alighted on the sill of an open window, within four feet of my plate. He brought his breath with him. When I essayed to shoo him away by raising my arms vigorously, he came right back at me by spreading his wings and opening his mouth, disgorging a liberal sample of what he could do in the way of raising a real disturbance. It was the limit.

At Panama we hustled aboard the steamer Sonora, and had no time for sight-seeing. The purser in issuing me a dining ticket by mistake used a blank first-class. Being ripe for adventure I said nothing and took a seat at a first-class table, while my cronies were peeking through the cabin windows, expecting to see me thrown out. Soon the head waiter tapped me on the shoulder and asked, politely:

"Sir, haven't you made a mistake? This seat is No. 83, and here is a gentleman holding that number."

"Then the purser must have mixed things up, for here is my ticket—No. 83."

He took it away, but soon returned and said:

"This seat is in the military officers' mess. Please vacate it and I'll give you a really better one."

It was me for the purser's table—seated alongside of him and first to be waited on, and a bottle of wine as a forfeit for the clumsy error he had made. I showed up there until the journey's end. The laugh was not on me.

The Sonora had no doubt been a good ship in the long ago. Having doubled the horn when steamships in Pacific waters were rare and since been in constant service, it had well earned a final rest down among the homes of the mermaids. Its timbers complained at the rising of a ground swell, and groaned frightfully in rough weather. Off the Gulf of Tehauntepec we encountered a gale. Great waves swept the deck, and the hatches were battened down. Many timid passengers retired to their berths, while at one time it seemed like half of those left in the cabin were on their knees—whether or not offering supplications they only knew, for the roar was something awful.

I did hear one earnest prayer, however, put up by an old Quaker from Philadelphia, who was hanging on to the rounds of my chair. It was in behalf of his beloved son, in San Francisco awaiting the arrival of his father, whom he had induced to visit the coast. The supplication was in effect that the young man might continue in the straight and narrow path he had chosen, and meet his parent in glory. Within a fortnight after the old man's arrival in Frisco his straight and narrow son relieved him of $1,200—every cent he had—and left for parts unknown.

Some time during the night before the morning we were due at our pier the Sonora ran into a fishing schooner, staving such a hole in her bow that in spite of all labor at the pumps water gained in the hold. A vessel with much water in her takes on a motion that gives one an uncanny sensation and makes the hardiest old salt afraid of his sea legs. I did not know of the accident until about daylight, when I "turned out." As I stepped on deck the old hulk gave a lurch that nearly landed me on my head, and made me reflect whether I had been "seas over" the night before.

We made fast all right, but say, you ought to have seen those terrified passengers make for the gang plank. It was a close call, for the Sonora came near sinking after being relieved of most of her freight. She never made another trip.

Although by 1861 the placer diggings had nearly played out there was little let up from the rush to the coast, and for years San Francisco was overrun by fortune seekers who struck it anything but rich. It was a jumping-off place, two thousand miles from anywhere—for printers. Los Angeles was a small trading post with a Spanish mission. The only outside dailies were at Sacramento and Portland—dinky four-page sheets. Virginia City had only a small weekly that had been moved from Carson City. In January, 1861, when my card went into Eureka (Frisco) No. 21, the union had 129 members—about sixty regularly employed. All other callings were full up, there was very little of anything to do, and the typo was in luck who got a chance to wash dishes or shoot biscuits in a restaurant for his grub.

At the time the Alta California, Call, Herald and Evening Bulletin (all four pages) were the only dailies, six days a week. The Chronicle and Examiner were not thought of until several years later. The best layout for me seemed on the Herald, with seven regs and three subs, and six hours' composition. I showed up there the best part of a year, getting in one to three nights a week. The Herald was on its last legs—quit a couple of years later. It was one of the oldest papers on the coast, popular until 1853, when the famous vigilance committee was organized. As the vigilantes were mostly desperadoes, who espoused the movement to save their own necks, the

Herald made free to utter bitter criticisms, for which it was boycotted and in a day it slumped from a prosperous sheet to a mere hanger-on—never to get back.

For two years conditions in the trade were not improved. The Alta really offered the best layout for subs. There were but twelve sits, and I often took a chance when eighteen to twenty philosophers were waiting around the stone for lightning to strike.

My recollection is that there was no protection whatever for "the wistful." Numbers of good-hearted regulars in all the offices (except the Bulletin) laid off at least two days every week; also, some of the meanest grabbers I ever met only stopped to breathe about once a month. On the Alta was a sallow, hollow-eyed piker who stayed with it two years, when I quit keeping tab and him still humping. He gave a regular premium of $20 for the ads—his weekly net average being about $60—and of course the premium was an incentive for whoever got it to hang up a "ringer."

There were stayers also on the Call. One was a real estate dealer, who put in his hours for rest at type-setting, and had use for a sub only two or three times a year. He wore an 18-inch collar, and bore a striking resemblance to his four-footed relatives, lacking nothing in jowls and wearing a rooter that he had to tilt sideways to see the spacebox. There were jolly good fellows on the Call, too, who knew no favorites and "fell" to those who most needed work. Tom Reed, the foreman—one of the best and best-known printers on the coast—after many moons concluded I had been hanging on long enough and gave me extra cases; but there was only one pair, for 5-point—the body type being mostly 6-point—and I was limited to six hours' composition. The lower case was so badly warped from having been through a fire that it soon became a miscegenated fright, and I threw up in disgust. The sub I put on was Russell Warren, afterwards of some note as foreman of the Chronicle.

Within a month after I hoisted the banner an invoice of new cases came around the horn for the Call, and my extra was made a full regular. (In the meantime, however, I had gone to "the land of Washoe," and was holding down a sit at $1 per in the booming new silver mining camp of Virginia City.)

The Evening Bulletin was the most forbidding layout, I reckon, that an anxious printer ever struck. From ten to twelve regulars were employed, while two subs eked out a miserable existence. I was in the composition room only a couple of times. Outside I could hear the hum of voices, but the moment I entered an ominous silence ensued, like Father Time with his hay tool had come to cut some one out. Not an eyelid raised, and all seemed to be holding their breath. I stood resting on one leg, not for long.

I relate the above facts not as a reflection on dear old San Francisco, but that printers of today may the better appreciate the advantages they enjoy under the wise and humane provisions that have since been installed by the union.

There was one little daily—the Mirror—that slipped my mind. After a couple of years of gasping, in the winter of 1861 it rolled over and died. It had large advertising contracts with the city that kept it alive during the fall, until a crisis came, which was met by half a dozen printers who with the union's consent agreed to get the sheet out for several weeks and take for pay $1,800 worth of city scrip, payable when special taxes for certain street work were collected. The scheme looked good to me as compared with nothing doing, and I was one of the gang that took the hook.

The contract was completed and we got our scrip all right. Then we placed it in the hands of the foreman, Tom Bail, who was to lobby a bill through the legislature authorizing the city to cash the scrip in a lump sum, as the taxes were being paid in dribs. After several weeks of waiting something happened. Bail went to the treasurer's office one day. Finding that half of the taxes had been paid, he drew the money and took steamer for Portland, and with him the balance of the scrip.

We never saw Tom Bail again, but had the satisfaction of learning that after being skinned of most of our wealth in a poker game he went to Boise City and there in a fit of despondency hanged himself. During my fifty-four years in the business I was never quite so high up on the rocks as at this time.

That printers may contrast present conditions in the trade with what I and many others passed through is my excuse for lugging in this lugubrious stuff, which may lack in present-day interest. It was the grit of the boys of those times, in Frisco as elsewhere, that gave the typographical union its present place—grandly towering above all other labor organizations—and it seems to me, from a personal standpoint if you will, that many of the old timers are not now dealt with or looked upon as kindly as they might and deserve to be.

Here is a summing up of the Frisco ordeal, as I saw it: For a number of years a majority of the members of No. 21, without consideration, provision or protection, many "moving on" for places to sleep, often not knowing where the next "eats" were coming from, with rarely a murmur sustained the minority in sits that paid them 75 cents at piece work, and $30 weekly—enabling piece men to draw down as high as $50 weekly. With one "string" a frugal sub not overly particular could buy a week's feed and room; but even the least spleeny finally wearied of being handed that sort of thing.

Is it any wonder that years later, when the union had more than doubled its membership and it was proposed to reduce the price of composition to 65 cents, upwards of two hundred members failed to come off when a strike was ordered. I was not there, but assume that among the "stayers" were many of my old compatriots who roamed the streets or did menial work. They had had a dose for an adult, and to walk out was to come back for more—to again stand on basement gratings to rest their italic heels.

I remember a pat talk made at one of the regular meetings that was prophetic and seemed to have a good effect in easing up the greed of some of the thoughtless—anyway a spell of more work for the unemployed followed. It went something like this: "I'm no longer a printer. I wash dishes in a restaurant for $30 a month, while you fellows rake off $30 to $40 a week; but presume am entitled to a seat here so long as I pay my dues. I have a soft snap compared with some of the boys, and can be counted on; but let me warn you that present conditions in the trade won't be stood for always. An earthquake may yet have the effect to jar loose those who now can't afford time even to attend the baby's funeral."

‡ ‡

It is a source of great satisfaction to me to recall at this late day that I voted twice for Abraham Lincoln—first at Rochester, N. Y. (my maiden vote), and in 1864 at the Eleventh ward poll in San Francisco. The election of 1864 on the coast was practically lined up for union and disunion; and the feeling was intense.

There were many secessionists (Southerners) in the city, and they all hated "Old Abe."

An English printer who was a naturalized citizen arrived from Victoria, B. C., where he had been for several months, a day too late to entitle him to vote. Being a rank secession sympathizer, as many Englishmen were, he was much chagrined; but having been warned by a good union man of trouble if he attempted to use the franchise, he concluded not to try it. Now it also happened that I had just come from the territory of Nevada, but had timed my return all right. Some one told him we had arrived the same day—he by steamship and I by a Sacramento river boat. We were chatting in the union rooms on election day afternoon, when I arose, remarking:

"I reckon I'd better go up to the Eleventh ward and vote."

"You vote! I'll be there, then, and see that you do some tall swearing, that'll get you into trouble."

"Don't think it," I replied. "The sentiment is all one way in Frisco. You'd get thrown out of court for trying to make a case against any one voting for President Lincoln."

That made him hot, and when one of the boys asked him why he didn't go back to British soil if this government was so obnoxious, he wanted to fight.

At the polling place I had to stand in line half an hour. When my turn came a voice in the crowd sang out, "I challenge that vote!" I had to do the swearing, all right; but the Englishman concluded to keep quiet, or if he tried to follow the matter up nothing came of it.

* *

On the coast a large per cent of the population had drifted in from the South during the gold excitement; but Uncle Sam was in the saddle, and Frisco was true blue. The city contributed liberally to the funds of the sanitary commission, and would have sent many soldiers but for transportation cost, which the government declined to pay—partly because there was a possibility that defense might be needed at home. It is no doubt still remembered that but one company—called the "California Hundred"—went from the coast to the front during the four years of war. The members paid their own passage. It was under the gallant soldier and brilliant orator, Colonel Ed. Baker, who was killed at Ball's Bluff the first day they were in action; and of the entire company, but nine lived to return to their homes.

Several companies enlisted. They were sent to Arizona and the plains to watch Indians, who during the war were restless and inclined to be troublesome. This dampened the ardor of would-be volunteers. There was no glory in camping on the desert, suffering from heat, lack of water and grub, perhaps to be picked off by sneaking Apaches.

When more men were wanted to keep the Indians quiet two companies were enlisted with difficulty—only under promise that they would be sent via Panama to the front. I joined one of them, and for a fortnight showed up every night at the armory for drill, becoming so proficient that probably I could to this day handle a musket without hurting myself. A printer named Valentine Dresser, who had been a "paper-cap" and was up in the arms manual, acted as drill master and was chosen lieutenant; while another printer was made commissary sergeant.

One night after drill several of us went to the Blue Wing—noted in Frisco history—for a night cap. While talking with me Dresser, whom I did not like, made a remark that got under my skin and I resented it by giving him a shove. There was a row of barrels lined up in front of the bar. He fell over one, and laid there until picked up.

That was the nearest I ever came to being in battle as a soldier. Dresser was a conceited, vindictive fellow, and as lieutenant-elect was already beginning to feel his oats. Did I give him a chance as an officer to get on to my neck and make my life a burden? Not me. When next day the company was sworn in I had an engagement elsewhere. It was just as well, for the boys were soon hustled down into the Apache country, near Tucson, where for several years their main pastime and occupation was matching graybacks and cussing the overbearing lieutenant.

* *

A few doors above the typographical rooms on Clay street the De Young brothers—Mike and Charley, then aged about 19 and 17—had a few cases of old type and a hand press and were printing the "Theatre Chronicle," which afterwards became the present daily Chronicle. Even in their teens they had a touch of the yellow newspaper instinct, as the following incident will show:

It was in 1864, at a time when every pony express was expected to bring great news from the front, and each afternoon thousands of anxious people gathered on Montgomery street—then the principal thoroughfare—awaiting the appearance of the Evening Bulletin, which was issued about 5 o'clock. One day about 4:45 an extra suddenly appeared at a dozen places along the street. It contained what purported to be a pony press report, under a half-column scare head of which I remember the first two lines:

"Richmond Taken! Ben Butler Shot While Riding Through the Streets!"

You ought to have seen the rush for those extras, at two bits each! Crowds fairly smothered the newsboys. The excitement lasted ten minutes, and then couriers rode furiously through the street proclaiming the extra a fraud.

Did the DeYoung boys act as "newsies?" Don't think it. They were in an ally, counting their gains. The excitement had quieted down long before the "enterprise" was traced to them.

When the daily Chronicle was started by the DeYoungs they had "the instinct" to turn a trick that soon put it well on its feet and left the other city papers to hold the bag. All fresh eastern news was received by pony express. They arranged with the riders to have their mail delivered at any point on the road, then hired a relay of fast nags to meet each pony miles out of the city. The Chronicle's esteemed contemporaries at length awoke to the fact that all important news was printed and on the street an hour before the old dailies received their mail.

⁂

On the 4th of July, 1861, I was representing cases on the Herald. It being a holiday no paper was to be issued; but wearying of celebrating, along in the afternoon I showed up to throw in and was sitting at case with a juicy handful when the rack began to shake violently. Being very old it was about ready to collapse, anyway. Presuming one of the boys had sneaked in and was trying to be funny, I said:

"That'll do, now."

John Cremony, the editor, was at work in his sanctum, which was penned off from the main office. Hearing my voice he called out:

"What's that you say?"

"Some one is shaking my rack," I replied. (It was still rocking furiously.)

"That's God!" he exclaimed; "and young feller, we had better be climbing out of here."

Then I noticed that the imposing stone was lunging back and forth, and when the looking glass and clock struck the floor and the office towel fell over on its side, I got wise. An earthquake was on.

My handful struck the stone bottom up and I followed Cremony down the stairs "two at a jump." He slipped, landed on his stomach and served as a cushion for me. A thousand people had reached little Merchant street before us, all pale as death and trying to keep their feet. The bravest of men lose nerve when the ground under them gets flossy that way. Their only thought is that it may open and swallow them.

Speaking of swallowing, reminds me that under the Herald office was a low-down dive, the proprietor of which was out on the sidewalk ringing his hands and crying. There was a row in that place regularly every night, accompanied by a crashing of mirrors, said to have been precipitated whenever a weak-stomached customer was handed a certain brand of whiskey. With the first swallow he went luny and threw his glass at the barkeeper. Also, it was said that decanters used for this brand were so eaten they had to be replaced with new ones every week. It seemed meet that this man should be the only one in the street to show a yellow streak to the extent of shedding tears, with indications of flopping down to pray.

No great damage was done to property by that quake, though the Bank Exchange and government building as a result of it showed large cracks in their walls.

⁂

Among the square boys of the early days was a printer named Wolff, who put in some years at Sacramento before showing up at the bay. Quiet, unassuming and generous, he was anything but a wolf by nature, except when on periodical sprees. Then it was booze for a ravenous maw until it landed him in the gutter.

One morning after a prolonged "spell" and a twenty-four hour's fast he awoke duly sober and powerful hungry—of course, broke. In desperation he went to a restaurant where he was a stranger, ate heartily, and made this spiel at the counter:

"Boss, I've just had a square meal, but am broke. Here is my ticket, and soon as I get busy I'll come and redeem it."

The cashier glared at him.

"There's the door," he said. "Get out. If you show up here again, I'll throw you out."

Wolff was humiliated; but after fasting until next morning he gave in to an unutterable longing. Thinking he might as well die on a full stomach he went back to the place, ate a big breakfast, and said to the cashier:

"Here I am again, you see, contrary to orders. Guess you'll have to throw me out. I was very hungry, and just had to do it."

The cashier nearly fell off of his stool. After taking a good look at his customer, who with a twinkle in his eye was gazing steadfastly at him, he said:

"Well, I'm d——d if I ain't stuck on your nerve. Have a cigar. Come any time, eat all you want of the best there is, and I won't charge you a cent."

After that Wolff was one of the restaurant's best customers.

On the Christmas day following there were several sports in the union rooms who had celebrated the night before, and were minus the price of a sandwich, let alone a holiday spread. All were hungry and all talking "eats."

Dan Donahue, a good natured soul, suddenly thought of a scheme, but was too much "befuddled" to work out the details.

"I'll tell you what let's do, boys," he said. "Let's go down to the Cafe du Rhone and try that gag of Wolff's. (Everybody had heard about it.) His nibs can't any more'n kill us, an' I'll go dead if I don't chew pretty soon."

So to the cafe they went. All had turkey, wine and cigars. Then Dan, as spokesman, took the lead to the counter. Standing with thumbs in vest, he grinned in a sickly way as he remarked:

"I reckon you'll have to throw us out, for (hic) there isn't a short bit in the crowd."

The proprietor, a big, husky Frenchman, rushed from behind the counter in a frenzy, exclaiming:

"By gar, I am ze what you call rooster zat can do eet!" and after striking right and left took two beats nearest him by the shoulders and shoved the bunch well into the street.

Poor Dan came off with a black eye, then had the nerve to go back and ask for a beafsteak to put on it. What was more, he not only got it, but afterwards paid the whole bill and stood in with the proprietor ever after.

* *

Probably few of my readers ever heard of Harry Courtaine, fifty years ago one of the most popular actors on the coast, or anywhere else. Harry was educated in Dublin for a priest, but had a prediliction for the stage, and shedding his robes took to it like a duck to water. His versatility was amazing. I must relate an instance of it that came under my observation.

When sober Harry was the dandy of Montgomery street. Quite tall, handsomely built and graceful, he always topped out his heavy broadcloth swallowtail and other glad togs with a new silk tile, waxed his big flaxen mustache to point due east and west, and there was never a speck on his shining patent leathers. When he passed by everybody turned to admire.

On the other hand, he was as strictly methodical in regard to his drunks. They were due about every six weeks, rain or shine, and lasted two; for he was such a lusher that if continued longer, snakes would climb the bedposts. When it was his time to "fall" he would deliberately saunter into a saloon and take a big jolt, all by his lonesome. Then he went straight to his room, dusted and laid away his fine rig and got into his poorest—throwing engagements without notice, no matter how important. In engaging him the managers had to take chances.

Harry would accept a treat, but never stand for one, so he always had money. On a spree he never spoke to anybody unless spoken to. When he had pressed the two weeks' limit he was usually picked out of the gutter, taken to his room and attended by a physician.

One night about midnight, after working on the Alta, I was wending my way home when on turning into Kearney street a man naked as Adam minus the fig leaves came rushing toward me, shrieking, "For God's sake, don't let them get me!" It was poor Harry, who had eluded a nurse and—the snakes.

Mark what followed. On the next Saturday night I attended a minstrel show at Gilbert's melodeon, and there, as a temporary end man, was Harry Courtaine. He was in one of his funniest moods, and was wildly cheered—I reckon partly because most of the audience had heard of his late free street show.

Monday night I went to the Metropolitan theatre, where McKean Buchanan, a celebrated actor, was to appear as "Macbeth." Would you believe it—just before curtain call the manager appeared and announced that as Mr. Buchanan had been taken suddenly ill, the great and popular tragedian, Harry Courtaine, had kindly volunteered to assume his part! He went through it without a hitch; and it was a fine and finished piece of acting.

Next morning the Metropolitan bills announced that the Bianchi troupe (a recent arrival from Australia, and stranded) would present the comic opera of "The

Barber of Seville," in which Harry Courtaine would appear as the festive barber. Everybody wanted to see him in opera, as it was a new stunt for him in San Francisco, and the house was packed. The part was faultlessly rendered, though having a rather weak voice Harry could act better than he could sing.

His great role was the lead in "The Rivals," a very popular comedy of the time. It was a part that no actor wanted, after him. On the Saturday night of that very week, at the Metropolitan, a "grand benefit" was tendered Harry—"The Rivals" headlining the bill. I was not present, but remember the press spoke of the performance as Mr. Courtaine's greatest artistic and financial success since his arrival in the city.

I have mentioned this instance of versatility believing there is no record of its having ever been equalled. Think of it —sure enough jimjams, minstrel, high tragedian, comic opera singer and comedian, all within ten days, and all star stunts!

Only a few years ago I saw an item in a New York daily telling of a case in a local police court. In the "catch" was a tall, unkempt, ragged, gray-haired man, with dull eyes and swollen face. When his name was called he answered with a feeble, trembling voice. The judge in a tone of compassion said he was grieved to see the prisoner in so humiliating a condition. "Since your only crime is against yourself," he said, "I will not impose a penalty on you, who have so often contributed to my entertainment and pleasure; and I have no doubt that for the same reason there is kindly sympathy for you in the breasts of all within the sound of my voice. Your hair is whitening, Harry, and the night is coming on. Try to control yourself in future. Do better, and I will be glad to help you in every way I can. You may go."

It was dear old Harry Courtaine—the last I ever heard of him.

⁂

"Backward, turn backward, O time in your flight,
Make me (Slug 5) again, just for tonight."

During the presidential campaign in 1864 I was holding cases on the American Flag—Henry George being also one of the compositors.

The only excuse for the Flag ever having been unfurled was its advocacy of Lincoln and the union cause. It was pulled down directly after the election.

After that I rarely saw Mr. George, and now remember little of him. In his young manhood, as I recall him, he was quiet and unassertive. Though differing from most of his fellow workmen by devoting his leisure hours to reading and study, there was nothing in his personality to forecast the great labor advocate and philosopher he became. My impression was that he burned the midnight oil a good deal, instead of having saloons and amusement places burn oil for him. But for a joke he perpetrated on me, I might have forgotten that we once pounded type together.

When the Flag ceased to wave I went to sub on the Morning Call. One day I was working for George Bloor—"Slug 5." I am particular to mention Bloor, for he was not only a grand good fellow, who would never stand by and see a goose egg handed me, or others, but the proud father of "Jimmy," the office cub, who afterwards was an editor of note in Salt Lake, Kansas City and eastern cities, and is now, I believe, writing in Los Angeles.

On this particular morning I was the first to show up, had lifted a handful and was sitting at case all by my lonesome, singing "Rock Me to Sleep, Mother"—a great favorite of the time. When the verse ended Henry George was standing in the door.

"Huh!" he exclaimed, "wouldn't you be a sweet babe for a fond mother to rock to sleep!"

I can never forget how merrily he said it, or the suggestion following:

"I heard you from the street, and came up two flights just to see who in the Call office can make a noise like that. Why, young fellow, you are wasting time. If I had your voice I wouldn't ruin my lungs setting type under hot gas lights, but overcome every obstacle in the way of making music my calling."

Why did I, as countless others have done, thoughtlessly neglect this one talent that nature gave me? You tell. Appearing as a fill-up in an opera chorus, and now and then volunteering a song on a benefit night, satisfied my ambition in that direction. To be able to give the odds of thirty caroms or no count in the "gentleman's game," with a big crowd looking on, was to me of more importance, or at least more satisfying, in those days, than being a Karl Formes.

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Except in the first of these sketches all of the old trails retraced inevitably lead to or from the printshop and affairs directly or indirectly connected with it, of which I was cognizant or in which I took a more or less active part.

I could write a book about San Francisco, its wonderful transformation, its interesting features and odd characters during the years I was there—of its having on my arrival a population numbering but forty odd thousand; of its social status, around which still lingered the spell put upon it by the vigilantes of 1853—a large part of the people unsettled, eating in restaurants and having their homes in rented rooms or tenements; of the city's growth, strikingly noticeable from Montgomery street (then the main thoroughfare) with its upper side west of California street a waste of sand hills, in two years built up along that section with solid brown stone and marble fronted blocks; of Market street, with not a structure worthy of notice, practically unused except as the terminal of a stub railroad, that daily ran a dinky engine and car combined to the old San Franciscan mission—a tumble down attraction for sightseers; of a weather-beaten shack, used as a carpenter shop by day and by night as a rehearsing place for amateur theatricals, occupying the site of the present Palace hotel; of the great cliff resort by the Golden Gate, then in its primitive state and reached only by vessel or a horseback ride through miles and miles of sand hills; of Charley Backus, Frank Mayo, Charles Thorne, Jr., Joe Murphy, Little Lotta and other stage celebrities, then just learning their entrances and exits; of Kearny street, a mere alley, being widened and succeeding Montgomery as the main thoroughfare; of the city's front, built on piles from Front street half a mile out to the great piers and the present sea wall, with water several feet deep when the tide was in under buildings, planked walks and streets; of the historic old postoffice, where we used to form lines blocks in length on steamer days, waiting for our mail; of the tenderloin district and Chinatown, then noticeable features but widely differing from what they are today; of buying for a week's wage two city lots on one of the city's seven hills, on which fortunes have since been spent in grading them down to the present level, and which with their improvements are now worth millions; of the "twa dogs," Bummer and Lazarus, that I often fed, and could tell stories about yet untold; of Emperor Norton I, czar of all the Russias, who always gave me a dignified greeting, and made me his special mes-

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senger for more than one ukase that was published in the morning papers; of that other mild, methodical lunatic, the "Free Ditcher," whom the "Emp" held in contempt because of his silk banner and glad Continental togs, while his majesty wore gray, often frayed at the heels—these two as they passed by glaring at each other with an abiding hatred born of professional jealousy; of Oakland, then mostly acreage property, marked here and there by a tumble down building—less important then than numbers of the villages now reached by the interurban line between Oakland and San Jose; of the Sacramento river steamers and their immense passenger and freight traffic of many years; of the slackened pour of gold dust from ancient river bed and gulch and bar.

Near early San Francisco, with its environments, is impressed upon my memory more vividly than any of the other cities in which I spent my type-setting days; but with this mere reference to a few of its salient features I must pass on.

The First Silver Boom.

The journey from Sacramento to Virginia City when stage lines were established, occupying about two days, was not an altogether delightful experience, albeit en route were scenic effects and thrills calculated to satisfy any reasonable tourist.

Early in the Washoe silver excitement, on in 1861, the trip was made by thousands of fortune hunters on bronchos, mules and burros, and on foot. Those who tramped in the winter season, packing blankets and grub, suffered great hardships. Many were the rude tablets along the old trail marking the last resting places of the weak who fell by the way.

By the spring of 1863 a forty-mile section of the Central Pacific railroad had been constructed east from Sacramento, landing passengers at Auburn—then a booming terminal. This I believe was the first bit of railroad to be built west of the Missouri river; though several miles of track between Frisco and the old San Francisco mission was laid earlier, and operated with an engine and car combined that carried passengers.

Before reaching the foothills from Auburn there was a stretch of valley road where frequent floods had deposited silt to a depth of four to six inches, so fine and light that with scarcely a breath of air stirring it rolled up in dense clouds, so that weak-lunged wayfarers only saved themselves from suffocation by masking their noses. On my first trip I was so fortunate as to secure the seat beside the driver, above the real smothering zone; but even so, when we arrived at the first change station there was a deposit half-an-inch deep on the rim of my hat. It was this silt that gave the Sacramento Valley perhaps the richest soil in the world for agricultural purposes; and more wealth has been reaped from its fertile acres than ever came in gold from the overhanging mountains.

"Ike," our driver, was a joker in his way, albeit some of the "insides" were prone to think it a mean, underhanded way. When the monotony of a steady pull had lulled them into a doze, we came to a little gully where a shower brook had crossed the road. When approaching it, remarking it was "about time for them ducks down thar to wake up," and warning me to hang on, Ike unloosed his whip and hit a fly on the off leaders' ear. The team jumped, and as the wheels hit the depression half a dozen heads played tattoo on the roof, while a streak of oaths issued from the windows that seemed like a blue rainbow on the dusty air.

Then that hard-hearted wretch went into a silent convulsion that shook the seat, and murmured:

"G-e-e-zus! but didn't that thar jar 'em loose!"

That was positively the most unique swearword ever uttered. Ike didn't seem to use it in a profane sense any more than Mr. Corntossle swears when he says "dum it." In fact, I don't remember to have heard Ike utter a real oath. He made use of this substitute on all occasions, as a creation of his own, with slightly varying emphasis expressing surprise, pain, irritation, appreciation or contempt. With a deep bass voice he gave a falling inflection to both syllables—the first landing somewhere under his vest, the last with a sudden thud in his throat.

Long subsequent to this trip I was one day standing by the desk of the manager of a furniture establishment at Lapeer, Mich., where I published a small paper. A clerk was waiting on a customer at one of the counters.

"G-e-e-zus!" exclaimed the customer. Whereat the manager laughed.

"That was odd," I said. "It must be ten years since I last saw the man who uttered that word, if ever; but I'll wager a box of Havanas I know him."

"Done," said the manager. "Mr. Temple, please step here a moment. I want to introduce you to this gentleman."

As Mr. Temple approached I turned my face toward him.

"G-e-e-zus!" he exclaimed, seizing my hand. "I don't need no introduction to this galoot. What on earth are you doing in this God forsaken land of turnips and ruta bagas? You're about the last person I ever expected to meet this side of the Rockies."

It transpired that Ike Temple, after many years of western life, was visiting a sister whom he had not seen since she was a child, and by way of celebrating their reunion was about to present her with a set of furniture. He had just made himself known to the manager, who with no idea that I ever lived in the far west thought he had some dead easy cigars coming.

At one of the change stations, reached at daybreak, was a saloon—an inevitable feature in the mountains wherever were gathered together half-a-dozen shacks or tents. On a bench in front sat an Indian who might have been Shacknasty Jack, a chief of the Modoc tribe, later noted as a desperate fighter in what was known as the lava bed war. He was a strictly hideous-looking creature, togged mostly in scars, war paint and feathers and heavily armed, with a rifle resting across his knees, and was sitting bolt upright on the edge of the seat as if about to flash and go off. His gaze was fixed on the eastern horizon, and as the stage came up he did not bat an eye. A tobacco sign might have swayed in the breeze that was blowing, but he did not.

The respite from the long night ride and pure bracing air stimulated me, and striking an attitude in front of the noble red man I pointed to the east and sang a couple of lines from "Masaniello:

"Behold, how brightly breaks the morning,
The sun is shining o'er the eastern hills."

Still not a muscle stirred; but when I said, "Pardner, come and have a drink," he grunted, sprang to his feet like something had stung him, and stalked to the bar without giving me a glance. When the scars and paint darkened the door the barkeeper was busily waiting on some passengers; but he dropped them, filled a glass to the brim with snake juice and set it before the chief, who downed it without a gasp. With another grunt Jack stalked back to his perch. When we came out he had again become a wooden image with a far-away gaze.

Later on this chief made a heap of trouble for Uncle Sam before cold lead persuaded him to become a "good Indian." The barkeeper seemed to feel that he had good and sufficient reason for being mighty polite to him.

We spent an hour at an eating station; which gave me time to look around. Nothing worth mentioning was in sight, except at the rude hotel—kept by a '49er—was a six-pocket billiard table which, I being a scrub player, attracted my curiosity. It was actually 9 feet long by 7 feet wide. It had a wooden bed, balls that had been "thrice turned," and small gunny sacks for pockets. Looking across its broad expanse, one could figure that having made a round-the-table shot he would have time to sit down and read a paper while his cue ball was coming back. A sound as of distant thunder reverberated as the ivories rolled over the wooden bed. One board was warped by having stood under a leaky roof, so that the relic was now in disuse

—crippled as well as outlawed by limitation. The proprietor, a bleary-eyed, palsied old man, explained that in bygone days the table was used principally for playing "rondo," a Mexican game at that time popular in the diggings, in which many thousands of dollars changed hands. He had seen as high as a thousand dollars in gold dust bet on a single roll. The game was played with eight balls, the size of pigeon's eggs. They were shoved with the hands, diagonally across the table. If an even number, or all, fell into the corner pocket the player made a "rondo," and won. If the number left on the table was odd, he made a "coolo," and lost.

Rondo had disappeared before my time, but there was another simple odd and even game, called "props," that in the early sixties caught the boys for their loose change and made coupon cutters of percentage sharks. It was played with four elongated white sea shells, one side of each having been removed and replaced with sealing wax. The player put up say four bits, which was taken by other players, and threw the shells on a green baise-covered table. If two or four came red side up he made a "nick," and won. If but one red or one white showed, it was an "out" and he lost. When he had thrown two nicks and doubled his money twice, he usually took down $1.25, left up a four-bit stake, and the dealer put two bits in his till. It took about two minutes to set the game and throw twice, so the dealer's rakeoff was $6 to $8 an hour; though when the playing was lively for larger stakes he would steal as much more. This game was played "wide open" in all second-class saloons, and became such a craze among wage earners in Frisco the authorities interfered and suppressed it.

This was the Henness Pass route. There was another, perhaps more popular, called the Placerville route, but the Henness Pass was not excelled for scenery and thrilling features. A real blood-curdler was called the "eleven-mile grade," which in that distance dropped several thousand feet from the summit of the Sierras west into the valley in which beautiful Webber lake is situated. The summit was reached from the east by a toilsome, rocky climb, made by most passengers on foot to lighten the coach. The long grade was a narrow shelf, hewn all the way in solid rock. It was smooth as a floor, but not wide enough for teams to pass safely. At frequent intervals were excavations in the side of the mountain, into which freighters could drive and clear the track for coaches, which had the right of way. It was the rule for coach drivers to make up on the down grade for time lost in approaching it and the horses were given their heads at full gallop—their clattering and the rumbling coaches making a racket that could be heard half-a-mile, warning approaching and slower jehus to "turn in."

At the beginning of this descent the scenery was grand, from a safe viewpoint, but lost to the awe-stricken gaze of most pilgrims, they having something to think about more nearly concerning their immediate personal prospects. The outer margin of the roadway was not so wide but that they could see a precipice directly below them with an almost perpendicular wall, so deep that pine trees at the bottom seemed not much larger than sagebrush.

At the summit I became an insider temporarily, giving up my perch to a weak-hearted pilgrim short of breath. Beside me inside was a former driver on the route, who had been fired for some cause. He was very bitter, and to injure the company was losing no chance to say nerve-racking things. So narrow a margin of road, the awful precipice and the apparently reckless speed we were making caused a creepy sensation to cavoort up and down my spine, no doubt shared by all. I asked the fellow if he had ever had an accident on the grade.

"Dozens on 'em," he replied. "See how that thar right leg of mine is braced, and a holdin' on? That comes of habit, just. I allus braced myself thataway soon as I hit the down haul, ready to jump in case a wheel run off or the leaders began to get flossy. Them hosses get skeered, all same as a tenderfoot, and sometimes go bughouse and jump over the side. Then I'd jest nach'lly jump t'other way, hear me. Soon as I'd looked over and seen that the layout was on its way, it was for me to hoof it down to the next station, get picked up and taken to headquarters an' put aboard a new outfit."

"Were no steps taken to rescue the passengers?"

"You mean to go where they lit? Whar's the use? You don't reckon thar was anybody a hollerin' fer help after fallin' a mile, do ye?"

"No; but the company at least ought to have taken steps to recover the bodies, and see that they were decently interred."

"Oh, I don' know. There's only a bad trail at the bottom of the canyon, with boulders a rollin' down like they're shot out of a gun and liable to smash you. Anyway, it would take a couple of days for a rescue party to git thar, an' what 'ud the coyotes an' buzzards an' crows be doin' all that time. I hear roughnecks who don't mind pickin' dead men's pockets have made a big thing down thar, but I wouldn't want none of it in mine."

Next to this veracious jehu on the danger side, with bulging eyes glued to the window, was a thin-faced, middle-aged man in a frayed black suit, crumpled silk hat and a dirty white cravat, who for all I know might have been a tract dispenser. I couldn't see his face, but imagine all the horror not depicted in the faces of the other passengers was concentrated in his. He was neither seated nor standing—about half cocked as you might say—so that his lean figure swayed to and fro and rose and fell with the motion of the coach. Clutched in his hands were an old satchel and an umbrella, as if he might be loaded to go off suddenly.

When the ex-jehu ceased talking he took a bite from a pocket flask that must have had a depressing effect, for with tears in his voice he soon began singing a doleful croon that had probably been "thought out" by a disgruntled stage driver. I recall the first of about twenty-one verses:

'Just listen, me boys, and I'll sidng ye a sogng—
A tadle (tale) of the road that's not very
logng—
'Tis about a fine lad who drove very wedll,
But hung to his ribbons and landed in hedll."

It told of a loving old mother, who knitted Jack's socks and mended his clothes, and died heart-broken when she heard of his awful fate; also, of a "nice yougng girdl" soon to have been his bride, who went to the dizzy brink, and when she "see where Jack had godne," shrieked fearful and went tumbling after.

Before this horror was ended the tract dispenser collapsed, dropped his belongings, and with chin on breast maintained a limp heap until we halted at the next station. I did not notice until then that his hair was streaked with white.

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If you were a poor devil of a type-sticker—a Johnny-come-lately in one of the strangest of strange places—and you had just got in a night at $1 per thousand, and on the way to your room, on the main street, at considerable intervals you should stumble over three horrid cadavers, and the cheerful information had been imparted to you that you might expect a similar experience on the following night, and every other night, and that if a policeman were standing in a doorway close by he would merely shrug his shoulders when the several impediments turned up their toes, and in the morning would order a cart and have the remains, boots and all, dumped into a trench in the outskirts, thus closing the incidents; and that the policemen of the place were all instructed to not, under certain conditions, interfere with any amount of shooting, cutting, clubbing, or any other process of cadaver-making that might happen on the main street or any other street, would you have the nerve to continue on to your domicile, partake of a refreshing, dreamless sleep, and next day return to the office to get in "another one," or would you watch for the dawn, go paste your string, turn it over to the "Shylock" and incontinently hit the trail for other scenes?

This is not a hypothetical question—not a suppositious one at all events—for it brings up an incident just as it happened to me in the spring of 1862, a few days after my arrival in Virginia City, Nevada. There was a dearth of printers, and cases had been handed me by the benevolent and gentlemanly foreman of the Union; and it may be as well to say here that I held them down for two years, when I was fired for insubordination.

It was during the first silver boom. There were fifteen thousand people in the city—then but two years old as time is counted, but exceedingly old in iniquity. Everybody had money to burn, and it might as well have been burned for all the good the bulk of it did—squandered as fast as made. There were few homes. New comers and old were in luck to find clean rooms and a place where square meals were served. More than half of the population was made up of disreputables, including hundreds of desperadoes who had graduated in played-out gold camps of California and lived to get away. These were doing most of the shooting, and to save being bankrupted by court expenses the authorities allowed them to shoot without let or hindrance, so long as they did not molest or injure reputable citizens.

And say, maybe you think it wasn't a picnic for those unregenerate cutthroats. On one occasion the blood-letting was so frequent that the Union took on a moral spasm and scathingly denounced not only the bad men, but the authorities for permitting such goings on. That night a man of blood made a break to get back at the Union, and it happened that I had a close call. I have never had to put a peg there to remember it. My stand stood next to a front window. About the hour when graveyards yawn I was "pegging away," and just reaching for a capital C, when a bullet crashed through the glass, and passing close to my ear, sank into the capital B box.

The contents went swarming, like sure-enough bees. So did the printers in my alley, without waiting to be called out by the father of the chapel. After that I never worked in that window at night without a curtain between me and the street; and that was the only time that violence was offered me, albeit I was an eye-witness to many a shooting-scrape and hundreds of bad men got their eternal deservings while I was in the city.

At this time Mark Twain (Sam Clemens) was a reporter on ~~the~~ Territorial Enterprise, and I presume incidentally gathering his notes for "Roughing It." He did not tell in his book of interesting happenings, humorous and otherwise, that would have filled the volumes of a small library. I have in mind one in particular that had Mark himself in the cast.

One day, with my sleeves rolled to the elbows, I was "throwing in" when a tall, gaunt, red-headed stranger came, with military tread, into the composing-room, and advancing several paces stood there as if transfixed. He had on a slouch hat, a travel-stained, old-fashioned linen duster, that reached to his heels, and in his hand was a large "carpet-bag," such as our fathers used to carry. Silently he surveyed the dozen or more printers, until his eyes rested on me. Then the bag dropped to the floor as if released by an automatic spring. With a movement like Hamlet's ghost he advanced to my side, seized my arm, stripped it to the shoulder, and tragically pointing to a vaccination scar, exclaimed:

"Behold, the mark! It is, it is my long lost brother. Found at last! Now may all the gods at once be praised. Friends, countrymen and brethren, you votaries of rotgut, let us all repair to the nearest inn and absorb, say, four fingers, by way of celebrating this glad reunion."

This was Artemus Ward (Charles F. Browne), with whom I had worked on the Cleveland Plaindealer at the time he was its local editor and writing for its Saturday issues the sketches that made him famous. No one who had seen him once could ever forget him.

There was no work for me during his four days' stay. He had been announced by the papers to lecture that night, but not a bill had been posted.

"Brother," he said to me, "I must say unto all the people, yea, upon the walls of the city, I am come; lest peradventure, they know it not, and bring not their shekels unto my hopper. Now, therefore, prithee, go thou with me to spread the glad tidings, and verily when we have done this thing we will repair again to the wine cellar of the publican—which, I know by the cut of his jib he's a d——d sinner."

These were his exact words, as nearly as I can remember. So overflowing with humor was Charley Browne that he seldom uttered a sober sentence, and one of his favorite modes of expression was in imitation of Holy Writ.

I thought I was in for a regular bill-posting job, but submitted. We went to the Enterprise office, and procuring a sheet of 24 by 36 news print, with a blue pencil he wrote upon it this legend:

ARTEMUS WARD
WILL
SPEAK HIS PIECE
HERE
TONIGHT.

This he tacked on the door of Maguire's opera house, and though the theatre was packed each night of his stay it was the only posting that was done.

I do not believe Mark Twain ever entertained an idea that he was to really write a book until that lecture gave him a jolt. Anyway, from that time there was a vein of wit all through his newspaper work that was not there before, and many of his brightest hits seemed to have a familiar cast to those who heard the lecture; though they were really original. He was following a new train of thought—evolving an idea—and I have since believed that, as a genius, he was dreaming until Artemus Ward awakened him to his capabilities; that no doubt the sayings of the greatest American wit preceding him had always been green in his memory.

A row of seats close to the stage at Maguire's, usually set apart for newspaper men, was called "the printers' pew." In one of those seats was Mark, with open mouth. I know, because I sat beside him. The lecture, announced as "Babes in the Wood," without reference to its title was a continuous string of grotesque and absurd witticisms—so keen, dry and far-fetched that for a moment no one could see a point, and eacn time a laugh was due the lecturer would pause until it came. With the first guffaw the audience seemed to catch on, and then it would go off like a corn-popper.

When the uproar had subsided, suddenly a spasmodic "Haw, haw, haw!" unreserved as if from a burro corral, would attract all eyes to the "pew," and at each interruption Artemus paused again, and glaring in mock anger, said something funny, like, "Has it been watered today?" once saying, "You must now all admit the truth of the old saw that 'he who laughs last laughs best.'"

Little did he think that that same laugh convulsed a greater genius than himself. Its tardiness was of a piece with Mark Twain's poky nature—even to his deliberate, drawling way of speaking, so often mentioned as one of his characteristics.

During his brief stay in Virginia City Artemus had an elaborate introduction to its wild and woolly ways. He visited every place where there were "sights," everywhere accompanied by a crowd of convivial spirits who (while enjoying his genial humor) were not unmindful of his prodigal generosity.

Once as he was passing a gambling den two Philistines ran into the street and began shooting at each other. A dead man was the result. "Poor devil," said Artemus. "They told me over in San Francisco you people often get real mad, like that, but I was hoping my 'Babes' would make you more tractable and better natured. I see it's no use. Thinking of the place he's on his way to makes me thirst for ice water. Let us repair to the deadfall of the publican yet again."

Artemus went by stage from Nevada to the city of the Saints, where he hobnobbed with Brigham Young, whom he referred to in his book as "the much-married man." On his last night in Virginia City, after the lecture, he with a crowd visited a variety show, and to gratify his inordinate appetite for excitement and fun went on the stage as a blackface artist. Not even the actors knew who he was, and his friends and the manager never gave it away, for he was as bad an actor as he was great as a humorist.

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During the two years I was in Virginia City J. T. Goodman was managing editor of the Territorial Enterprise, while Thomas Fitch, afterwards famous as the "silver tongued orator of the west," was editor of the Virginia City Union—both morning papers. The Union had recently been moved from Carson City, where it circulated as the Golden Age. John Church was its managing editor and Adair Wilson a local writer while Mark Twain and Dan de Quille were the Enterprise locals.

Joe Goodman was a handsome, reckless young fellow, talented and brilliant, and could fill his editorial page off hand with articles on leading topics that would have done credit to a seasoned veteran. Tom Fitch was older, of wider experience, and handled a caustic pen. (By the way, he acted as private secretary to James Buchanan during the campaign of 1856, in which Mr. Buchanan was elected president.)

Goodman and Fitch took a strong dislike to each other, and as sometimes happens even to this day, through their columns indulged in bitter personalities, in which Fitch seemed to rather have the best of it until one morning the Enterprise contained a sharp attack on his private character (more or less true) that called for blood. So Fitch challenged Goodman.

Now this was just what Joe wanted, for he was mad enough to kill Fitch; and the chances were in his favor, for he was rated one of the nerviest and best shots in the territory. One of his favorite resorts for pastime being a shooting gallery, it was common talk among his friends that he could hit a short bit four times out of five at ten paces. Nothing was known of Fitch's ability in that line.

Seconds had perfected arrangements for the affair to take place near the city, at 5 o'clock next morning; when friends having interfered, the principals were placed under $1000 bonds each to keep the peace by Judge C. C. Goodwin, then a justice of Storey county.

It was then secretly agreed that the meeting need not necessarily be postponed, as it was but twenty-eight miles to the California line, beyond which of course the Nevada court had no jurisdiction. So some time after midnight two hacks, containing principals, seconds and trusted friends, left the city and crossed the line in due time.

Being challenged it was Goodman's privilege to name the weapons, and he chose duelling pistols. By agreement they were to stand at fifteen paces and fire at the dropping of a handkerchief. Should the first exchange be sans result, "reload and repeat or retract and retreat."

Joe Goodman went to his ground as jauntily as if on the way to a fair, his features betraying neither concern nor thought of the grave business before him. He wore a boutonaire of wild flowers, and as he stood there, bent to inhale their fragrance. Fitch, on the other hand, was pale, and with nerves at high tension walked stiffly to his place. It was believed that at the last moment he would develop a yellow streak; but he proved to be game clear through. At the signal he swiftly raised his weapon, and fired before the handkerchief touched the ground. This was the first time he had ever pressed a hair trigger, and it betrayed him. Though really a good shot his bullet went aimless and wide of the mark. He then dropped his arm, looked daggers at his adversary and coolly awaited his fate.

Goodman now had Fitch at his mercy. Deliberately raising his weapon he aimed straight at his head and held the bead a moment. But if he thought a flinch was coming, he was off wrong. By his pose and glare of defiance Fitch said, as plainly as in words: "Shoot, you coward—I am at your mercy!"

No doubt the thought came to Goodman that he was about to kill a defenseless man, in cold blood; for suddenly his bearing changed—hesitation took the place of wicked determination. Glancing toward the spot where his party was standing he winked, then deliberately lowered his aim, and Fitch hit the ground with a thud and a hole in a fleshy part of his right leg.

One of the first to reach him was his antagonist, now "seeming more in sorrow than in anger." Goodman's first words were something like this: "Fitch, I'm sorry I hurt you—couldn't be hired to do it again, this way. You can take another shot at me, any time, and then if you like we'll call it off."

The proposition was of course preposterous, but Fitch was overcome by its generosity. They afterwards became pretty good friends.

In the Enterprise office was a printer named Stephen Gillis, who took great interest in this affair. Being a Mississippian born and bred, Steve had the duelling bug in his system to a fighting degree, and at times it seemed his greatest ambition was to meet an adversary on the field of honor, "by Gad, suh!" Wrathy because Goodman would not carry the meet to a sensational ending, Steve resolved then and there to seek satisfaction on his own hook. It was a cinch that with opportunity he would fight all right, for being handy with his fists he had been the hero of many encounters in a rough and tumble way, always getting off without a scratch. Traveling with "Little Ward," also an Enterprise printer, and on the side an all-around athlete, it was a dull Saturday night when they did not clean up a saloon or get the best of a street quarrel.

Only the night before the big duel Steve had met with "Red Ed," foreman of the Union job room, and engaged in an argument with him as to the merits of the difficulty. Now Red, standing six feet in his stockings, was quite muscular and had for years been a teacher of boxing and gymnastics in a gym. He was a red-haired, freckled-faced, good-natured Vermonter, not very easy to get "riled;" but when Steve made several gratuitous remarks about "flat-footed Yanks" and "mudsills," something came into Red's steel blue eyes that did not look real good, and Steve craftily concluded not to chance his record in a fistic encounter, albeit a remark had been made by Red that any gentleman must construe as a "coa'se insult, suh!"

So it came to pass that next day after the meeting, as Red was at the imposing stone locking a form, a messenger came from the Enterprise office and handed him a note. It was couched in as mean, insulting language as the young southerner could command, and informed Red that though he was no gentleman—"a low-bred, cowardly scrub, suh," if he wanted satisfaction he could have it, and knew where the writer could be found.

Red's prevailing color may have deepened a little, but he uttered not a word. Writing at the bottom, "Go soke your head!" he returned the note to the messenger, resuming the mallet and shooting-stick as though nothing had happened.

Whether Steve followed Red's laconic advice I did not learn, but something must have taken the swelling out of his thinker, for this affair of "honah" ended there.

After this veracious account was written my attention was called to an autobiography of Sam Clemens, quoted in his

"How to Tell a Story." Therein it is related that Clemens had a difficulty with a Mr. Laird, editor of the Union, a challenge was passed, and they went out to fight with navy revolvers at fifteen paces. Steve Gillis acted as Clemens' second. While preliminaries were under way, Steve hauled off and killed a sparrow at forty paces or such a matter. The shot was attributed to the great humorist, and Laird fled from the field.

As a matter of fact, Jim Laird was not a writer though one of the Union company and manager of the jobbing department. All that was "dead game" about him was a wooden leg. He was anything but a fighter—didn't look like he could shoot without shutting his eyes. So far as Clemens was concerned, the only time I ever knew him to get next to an explosive was one Fourth of July, when he tied a bunch of crackers to a whiffet's tail. He may not have told the biographer about his duel except as a joke; but he had a weakness for posing as a star in his stories, and at a late day saw no harm in relating the Gillis affair to suit his fancy.

I shall have to let my version of it go uncorrected.

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Virginia City had a big fire in 1863, would have been wiped out but for the sudden changing of a strong wind. With the exception of two brick structures all the business buildings and tenements at that time were mere shells, constructed of mountain pine or fir, with tapestry walls. They burned like timber. The Virginia hotel with three stories and containing upwards of two hundred rooms, was consumed in twenty minutes; and though it was midday few guests saved even their gripsacks. As I remember, about one-third of the city went up in smoke.

There were two-hand engines, manned by companies largely composed of dive keepers, gamblers, toughs and bums. They were practically rival aggregations, those companies—each having desperate characters for their chiefs, while the chief engineer easily carried the trumpet as the champion brute.

The water supply was scant, its only source being one of the Comstock's mine tunnels. In the midst of the morning it went dry and the chiefs decided to move their engines to possibly better positions. No. 1, working in D street was ordered up to C, while No. 2, in C street, started at the same time to go down to D. The chiefs were not on speaking terms, or what happened might have been avoided.

They undertook to pass each other in Taylor street, little wider than an alley and guttered by freshets from Mount Davidson until the roadbed was a deep, V-shaped cut. The engines slid to the center and locked. Accusations of carelessness passed, one word brought on another, and a fight ensued in which over a hundred choice spirits took part. As they were "cribbed, cabined and confined" in the narrow space, it was like tying a couple of cats together and throwing them over a clothes line—Kilkenny cats at that. Pistols, knives, wrenches and wagon stakes were instantly at a premium. Broken heads were too numerous to mention. Among the casualties were four or five men killed. Jack Williams, city marshal—a bad man himself—when the hostilities ceased had several kinds of lead in his system. It was necessary to plug such a case-hardened wretch through the heart to kill him, but only his kidneys, lights and liver were damaged, so he soon recovered.

The Union office was in the second story of a building siding on Taylor street. Looking down on the melee we boys took it all in, as safely as grandees at a bull fight. It seemed to have lasted an hour, though ten minutes is a long time under such circumstances. In the grand wind-up Macbeth and Macduff used to cut and slash and back and fill for hours, it seemed to me as a boy; but I am now satisfied Macbeth made a hideous face and turned up his toes inside of two minutes.

Caught in the alley during the unpleasantness and endeavoring to make his getaway was a young printer with whom I was chummy, Ed. T. Plank. He was passing by an old wagon when a double-fisted fireman, armed with a stake, sneaked up from behind and struck a vicious blow at his head. I yelled, but the warning was too late. My friend landed in a limp heap under the wagon, and I believed him dead. That night at Maguire's I sat beside a man whose head was so bandaged I could not get a glimpse of his features, only visible from the stage. At the close of the play, when he arose and turned, I found it was my chum who had got his in the fireman's fight.

* *

A young fellow who had tramped to Virginia from the coast and arrived with such loud pedal extremities as to suggest the soubriquet of "Sugarfoot," for incurring the jealousy of a barkeeper died with his boots on, so dramatically that I must relate the incident.

Though Sugarfoot made his living around gaming tables, he was always well dressed, quiet, never profane or vulgar and seemed to have been bred a gentleman. If there was the trade-mark of a gambler about him it was not in sight. So he came to mingle quite freely with the more respectable class. I thought of him that there might be an influence somewhere, maybe a mother's love, that would yet reclaim him from the downward course.

One evening I sat with other printers in a game for pastime (and the beer) when Sugarfoot came up and asked if he might take a hand. He stayed through a game then excused himself saying he had an engagement on C street, a block away. He had not been gone five minutes when we heard the report of a gun. As that, in Virginia City, meant trouble, we left the table and went out into the open. Several persons were running toward C street and our party followed. Turning into that street, we were confonted by a crowd on the walk, gathered around the body of a man. It was poor Sugarfoot, with his face and part of his head blown off. It transpired that as he was passing the saloon where his rival was employed, the barkeeper seized a double-barreled shotgun charged with buckshot and, from behind the counter emptied both barrels at his victim.

There was no arrest. On the other hand the assassin had his wages raised for having attracted a crowd of customers, who called to learn the particulars.

* *

Speaking of gamblers, one of the slickest short-card players that ever struck "the land of Washoe" was Andy Blessington, mentioned by Mark Twain in his "Roughing It." I knew him well by sight. He was a bundle of nervous energy, full of fun, and when on the street usually the center of a crowd of idlers who appreciated good jokes. It was said of him that he could not get into a poker game with gamblers, it being a cinch that he would soon have all the money.

One night in the Gould & Curry saloon, I was watching a game, when Andy addressed me:

"Do you want to see some fun?"

"Yes," I replied. "Where and what is it?"

"Those fellows there are tenderfeet, just from over the divide, and ought to be initiated. They don't know me, or the game, more'n a jack rabbit. I'm broke. Stand in with me ten dollars' worth and watch. I pledge you my word that in half an hour I'll have them standing around with their hands in their pockets wondering how it happened."

"No, I'm not looking for that kind of easy money."

"Well, then, lend me ten dollars and if you're not here when the jig is up I'll return it tomorrow."

It was as safe as a bank to lend any gambler a small sum, for in the code of their fraternity it was understood to be a reflection on all for any one of them to owe money borrowed on the outside. They were all liable to strike a lean streak at any time and need "the price." So, if one went back on his word that way, he was tabooed by the gang—boycotted—which meant that he might as well hunt for pastures new.

Impulsively I handed him the money and lingered to see the result As he left me he lifted a pack of cards from his coat pocket and winked, which gave me to understand that it was a "cold deck." All he said was, "Watch me," and a moment later he was in the game.

The first thing he did was to place the "stacked" cards on his right knee.

Then he got busy. The game was played with quarters and halves for chips, and it was a rule that the winner of a "pot" also won the deal. Every time considerable bets were made before the draw, Andy would pile the coin in a single stack, and somehow two or three halves would stick to his palm. In this way he had nearly doubled his capital, when he won a pot, again doubled his money and took the deal. His movements were so smooth and quick that, though watching, I actually did not see him swap the cards, but after they were dealt he looked up at me and winked again, as he slyly took the discarded deck from his knee and put it in his pocket.

Then the fun began. The "sucker" next to Andy made a small bet and it was called and raised three times successively. Then Andy stacked up the contributions, a couple of dollars again stuck to his palm, and he came back with his whole bundle. All stayed, while the man with the next best hand made several bets on the side.

The show down was great. There were three "full hands" and two sets of "fours!"

The nerve of him! Any other man making a deal like that would have been shot on the spot, but Andy was wise—

had hypnotized his victims with funny stories, and that made them too good natured to quarrel. Three of the players went broke. He of the side winnings had about twenty dollars, and Andy proposed to cut cards for the whole. He accepted and lost. There was then not a dollar on the table outside of Andy's pile. The end had come in less than half an hour.

All Andy said was: "Well, I'm d—d! That was the biggest luck I ever saw in a poker game. Boys, the drinks are on me. Whad'll you have?"

* *

At Maguire's opera house one night, while the audience was waiting for the curtain it was entertained with a by-play not on the bills. A notorious gunman named Howard, without prelude, whipped out a big navy and began firing at another roughneck, named Macnab, who was seated in the same circle on the opposite side of the house. Instantly there was a rush from the seats in the vicinity of Macnab, who sat with his hands up, signifying that he was unarmed.

"An' you call yourself a sport," yelled Howard, a'goin' around without a gun on? Go heel yerself, 'cause I'm goin' to git ye on sight."

Macnab obeyed the order. Howard, a few days later, trying to keep his word, died with his boots on. He had seven nicks on the butt of his pistol—a record of the number of men he had killed.

The temporary account of empty boxes and a few damaged seats around where Macnab was sitting were the only other results of the theater shooting. I happened to be in the stampede.

⁂ ⁂

I left the Virginia Union by "special request," as the sequence of an incident that happened six months previously. Subs were scarce then, and I had put in two or three ringers under compulsion, when one morning a printer named Joe Eckley, just in from California, showed up and went to work for me.

Joe was a first-class compositor, without a blemish, but had the misfortune to be slightly deaf.

Next morning as I entered the office the foreman—Sam Glessner—said to me:

"J. B., you'll have to go to work today, or put on another sub."

"How so?"

"I don't want that man Eckley around here. You have to throw a mallet at him to make him hear."

"But Sam, he has worked for years on the coast without that objection ever being raised. Besides, he knows the business and don't have to be spoken to often. His card, and humanity, should insure him from being fired for such a reason."

"Well you heard what I said, and it goes."

I was indignant, and did not return to the office for a week.

Nothing had been said about my being fired, so when in the humor I returned to my cases. As Sam came in he gave me a stony stare that told me two things. On second thought he had concluded that to bar Eckley for such a cause would involve him in a personal difficulty, and might bring on a strike; while to let me out for keeping him on would have a like effect. Secondly, he had a grudge laid away for me, that would be uncanned on the first opportunity. He was a pusilanimous cur that no one liked—given to grudges and contemptible ways.

What followed proved that I had the situation down pat. Eckley subbed in the Union as long as he liked, and so far as I know never learned of the attempt to bar him. Years after he was appointed state printer of Nevada, holding the position for a number of terms.

Incidentally, there was a grudge on the side that may have had something to do with my ultimate "layoff." In the first year of the rebellion, when the government was hard pressed for specie and had not yet issued the fractional paper currency which proved such a boon to the country, postage stamps were used in the eastern states for change. No greater abomination was ever circulated as money. If one happened to have a pocket full and they got damp, just imagine how they resolved themselves into a stuck up, impossible wad, until laundried not worth a beer.

On the other hand, at this time there was a United States mint at Virginia City, coining bullion from the Comstock lode, and the town was overrun with new silver quarters and halves until the government found a way to transfer the mint's output to the national treasury. Then came an order forbidding the issuing of a dollar of specie locally. Previously it had become so plentiful as to go at 3 per cent discount, and the Union company, with many other business firms, was turning an honest penny by exchanging its gold collections at the mint for silver. So it followed that week after week when the ghost walked the Union boys needed gunnysacks in which to carry away their plunder. For instance, if one had made $50 he was certain to be handed $10 in quarters and $40 in halves. Following a protest, one week the force refused to accept the all-silver proposition; whereupon in a rage the company changed the silver to all gold, and after that none was paid to us except in odd change of less than $2.50.

This tale is none too long for the size of the cat. Within six weeks after the government order went into effect silver actually went to a premium, so scarce it had become. The banks no longer paid it out; and the city being dependent on freighters, they received for their goods and carried away about all the currency in circulation.

Then we were up against a condition more disagreeable than the first. If one's name was on the roll for $62.50, he would receive three twenties and a $2.50 piece, then could hunt for change in vain the city over. About the only way to break a twenty was to buy a stack of faro checks. I remember of tendering one successively for a meal check, room rent and current expenses, and at the end of the week still having the piece, mortgaged for more than its face.

In time the change famine was eased up by importations from California; but the Union office had a grouch, just the same, that could be felt for a long time. Frequent sarcastic remarks handed out by Sam Glessner gave me to understand I had been spotted as a chief instigator of the "gold strike."

In the summer of 1864 one day the bottom fell out of Virginia City. To be more explicit, at the beginning of a certain week the boom was on, with everything moving pretty much as usual—the miners were employed, new properties were developing, capital was being invested, and there seemed the usual amount of money in circulation. At the week's end something like a panic was on. Capital had gone into hiding, non-producing mines and wildcats had closed down, many men were idle, money was scarce. This was the legitimate result of incautious investments and a scandalous amount of wildcatting, with dark transactions on the local and San Francisco mining exchanges that had been going on for many months. The prodigiously rich Comstock lode, with its steady outpour of wealth and limitations not yet defined, seemed to have impressed many with the belief that all Washoe was underlaid with a blanket of silver. When the break came such alarm took possession of everybody engaged in mining, legitimate and otherwise, that a long period of dullness followed.

The effect of this panic can be well illustrated by telling what it did to the newspapers. Within a month the Enterprise and Union were on hardtack rations, while a couple of struggling sheets had furnished stiffs for the beginning of a newpaper boneyard. Whereas, before the scare the big papers were crowded with ads and used 5 and 6-point body type, the Union's editorials were now in 10-point, its news in 7-point and miscellany in juicy 11-point. It was awful.

As I entered the office one morning my friend Sam sat in the bull pen, red-eyed, an hour before due. He looked almost glad about something, and before a word was spoken I had a hunch that he had dug it up.

"J. B., you'll have to lay off for a while," he said.

"For which, though mine are among the oldest cases, I venture to hope you won't allow your feelings to unnerve you."

"Back talk isn't necessary. Your cases are vacant."

"Oh, I was just joshing, you know. I'm going to bottle my back talk for future use. You'll have to go a flying out ol here yourself within three months, and then, Sam, if you hoof it to the coast, my turn will come."

Many of the boys had to leave Virginia City, and there was but one way out—coastward. I never saw Glessner again. He, with other printers, forming a stock company, took over the Union and plant for what was coming to them. But the daisies had blown over its final resting place long before 1867, when Virginia City was entering upon its second boom—the biggest in its history.

The Inspired Liar.

In the quite long ago James W. E. Townsend (otherwise "Jim"), printer, jokesmith and reformed sailor, had a reputation in California as a tolerable wit, and an all-around liar in narrative and harmless form.

Occasionally Jim would say funny things calculated to make a wit of national reputation stop to listen; but unlike Mark Twain, he always laughed louder than anybody at his own jokes; also, he was strictly original—lacking Twain's abnormal gift of making merchandise of the thoughts of others by masquerading them in unrecognizable togs. When it came to spinning Munchausen-like yarns, with himself as the hero, he easily had Twain skinned.

I first worked with Jim Townsend in the composing room of the San Francisco Mirror, a consumptive sheet of some note in its brief day. It hit the newspaper cemetery early in the sixties. He afterwards worked with me on the Virginia City (Nev.) Union.

When on standing time he would often convulse "the alley" with some lively personal experience which nobody believed, during the telling of which his high-tenor hee-haw would echo from buildings across the street.

But there was a streak of unaccountable dullness in his makeup, for one so bright in other ways. To illustrate, one night while setting time copy, consisting of a pinch of unpasted jokelets, he sang out:

"Say, boss, there's a joke on both sides of this piece."

"That's not your fault. Set 'em up," said the foreman.

When the proof came Jim had to lift these lines on to the dead galley:

"Gadzooks! a coward, quotha? Nay, then, draw villian, and I will smite thee hip and thigh." (Evidently from a story.)

Townsend was something of a practical joker, too. I recall one of the funniest things he ever perpetrated, though it had a singular and serious ending.

On the Mirror was subbing a broken-down, drunken ex-editor from the interior known as "Warhorse" Jones. He would work a few days, then be drunk a few weeks, until he came to be lined up as a chronic old bum.

When a writer, "Warhorse" acquired a reputation for sensational bellicose attitudes. He was a bitter secessionist, and when the war broke out seldom put an edition to press that did not make the country fairly shudder for miles around.

Every week he mopped the earth with "Abraham Africanus the First," as he called our beloved president, and for light diversion obliterated several esteemed union contemporaries if they chanced to cross him. He was everlastingly about to fight a duel, but on one pretext or another never did. He actually scared a man out of the state on one occasion. Generally well known to be an arrant coward, to many his violence was a source of great amusement and originated his nickname.

Among Jones' peculiarities was a morbid horror of smallpox. Seldom a day passed that he did not refer to the dread disease with bated breath. Once after a prolonged spree he staggered into the office in a shaky condition, his face spattered with mud from the wheels of some vehicle. Townsend, at the dead stone about to lift a handful, suddenly struck an attitude of fright and yelled:

"Great God! Warhorse, what's the matter with you?"

Jones turned pale, but reckoned he was only feeling bad for the want of a drink.

"Drink!" exclaimed Jim, backing away. "Why man, you're all broke out with smallpox. Look in the glass."

Across the office was a mirror, and in it Jones caught a glimpse of his soiled face. Uttering a cry of terror, he leaned against the dead stone for support. Jim then edged up a little and said compassionately:

"Now, Warhorse, listen: Don't you lose a minute in getting to the hospital. You'll give us all a dose if you don't light right out. If you're too sick to walk I'll send for a dray."

Jones then braced up, and without a word staggered out of the door. Several days later word came from the pest house that he was there, so badly disfigured with pustules his intimate friends would not know him. In fact, he went through every stage of the disease and came near dying.

The case caused much comment among physicians, and was the subject of a lengthy article in a medical journal bearing on similar phenomena. His doctors decided that he had simulated the disease through abnormal fear, and in fact did not have smallpox at all.

On one occasion Townsend related how he was once on a three years' whaling voyage in the northern Pacific; that when the jig was up the ship sailed south, made Honolulu harbor and dropped anchor for a few days.

While on shore he happened into a daily paper office, and making himself known was asked to go on cases for a day. Nothing loth, he peeled his coat and in eight hours piled up 14,400 of solid brevier (8-point). That string, he said, paralyzed the foreman, who had never before seen a printer who could average more than 1,100, and said a "hand" who could stick type like that ought to be willing to work for two-thirds of the scale.

Now Jim was really a 1,700-an-hour swift. So this story easily added one more to his wealth of fairy tales, for fancy a comp with caloused hands, stiff with "tar, pitch and turpentine," after three years on shipboard striking an 1,800-an-hour gait!

While on another alleged whaling voyage, this time in the south seas, his vessel was wrecked near one of the Fegee islands, and he with five other tars was rescued by the natives. They had not yet been converted from the broiled missionary habit, and after a protracted counsel decided upon having a grand feast at every new moon so long as the sailors lasted. The unfortunates were placed in a pen, and every month Jim saw the fattest of his comrades led away to the music of kettle drums, until he only remained. He was a skinny, lantern-jawed New Englander, so had the rest easily scooped for last place.

When at length his turn came the king appeared, preceded by drums and followed by half-a-dozen islanders in single file. They felt of Jim's ribs with a no-good grunt, but opened the pen and he saw that after his six-months' weary wait it was all off with him.

The king was togged out for a grand wind-up, and would brook no delay. He had on an extra coating of paint, a missionary's plug hat and a red necktie, which was all the clothing in the crowd except the rings in their ears.

In the return procession Jim was placed immediately behind the king. It seemed a cinch, he said, that he would be next to the fire in a few minutes, so for a parting diversion and to stretch himself after the long confinement he sprang to the side of the king, gave him a high sign and began a series of grotesque postures and kowtows that paralysed the islanders, ending with a salaam to the cardinal points of the compass. Then he handed the king a plug of tobacco, that he had concealed under his shirt though he did not use the weed.

Hiding that tobacco was the luckiest move Jim ever made. The mere sight of it was electrical, for his benighted captors had learned that to eat flesh saturated with tobacco meant deathly sickness. The king rolled his eyes skyward and gagged; then they all gagged.

After a consultation, all meanwhile eyeing Jim with loathing, he was returned to the pen innocent of what was the matter.

Next morning, however, he was taken before the king, who by signs gave him to understand he was an immune, being no good for culinary purposes. It seems, too, the king had taken a great shine to Jim on account of his graceful posturing and gall. It ended in his being adopted by the islanders and forced to marry one of the king's daughters—with the view, he presumed, of improving the breed. Finally he was made the king's viceroy, or something like that, and he said he might have lived there happily ever after but for having made his escape on an English brig that touched the island for water, leaving a son as bow-legged and black as its mother.

A trick that Townsend played along in the eighties seemed to have savored more of cupidity than fun, and got him into disrepute, among those not on the inside at least.

He was editing and printing a small weekly up Grass Valley way, that was in the political interest of the owner—a candidate for a county office. Jim had not been paid for several weeks, the sheet was to be closed down at the end of the campaign, and it began to look very much like he would have to walk out.

In a saloon one evening he was discussing his boss in uncomplimentary terms, and mentioned the unpaid stipend. It happened that the opposition candidate was one of several listeners. Calling Jim to one side he said:

"Look a here, pardner, you ought to know by this time that that thar boss of yourn is a dead beat an' no good on earth. He won't pay you a dollar. With that thar paper he has the "age" on me, an' I'll tell you what I'll do: "If you'll throw out his truck and turn the editorial page of the next issue over to me, I'll see you get your wages in full and give you $200 on the side."

Jim accepted the proposition.

All Friday night the conspirators worked with curtains down; the edition was made ready for the postoffice, and Jim took mighty good care at daylight next morning to hit the stage for Frisco —maybe to journey on and rejoin his dusky partner in the Fegees.

I do not know how the election resulted, and have never since heard directly of the inspired liar.

Union Man in a Rat Hole.

In the spring of 1865 I blew into New York from the Pacific coast, after five years' absence. May 1, at Aspinwall, on climbing to the deck of the Atlantic steamship, the first thing I saw was a large placard nailed to one of the masts, which read:

"President Abraham Lincoln was assassinated on the night of April 14 by John Wilkes Booth, the actor, while attending a performance at Ford's theater, Washington."

Imagine the sensation caused by that announcement among the more than 1,000 passengers!

I mention this incident because of the fact that the San Francisco Press, a "secesh" "rat" sheet, re-echoed the cry of the assassin, "Sic semper tyrannis!" for which the office was gutted and its contents thrown into the streets by an infuriated mob; and the Press, then and there surrendering up the ghost, has indirectly to do with this story.

I was made a member of No. 6 May 12, 1860, and worked on the Herald until the following fall; so on my return naturally "showed up" there. The chapel father reported a big sub list, and suggested that as I was little known outside of the Herald I should go over to the World and strike Pinkerton for a job.

This man Pinkerton is no doubt remembered by many oldtimers as one of the meanest, most vicious "rats" the earth ever produced. He was an overgrown, brutish-looking fellow, with a voice like a steam whistle—shrewd as he was unfair. When he snorted an order from the bullpen some trembling rodent was sure to drop a handful of type. After growing a long tail in Philadelphia, Pinkerton went to New York and induced the management of the World to make him foreman and employ non-union men, a gang of whom was always at his beck. Be it said in extenuation for the World owners that at the time he applied to them they had sunk upwards of $300,000, and were willing to accept most any proposition looking to a reduction of expenses.

No. 6 was anxious to sneak union men into the office, with the view of ultimately rooting Pinkerton out. Let me state here that the scheme worked beautifully. It was soon discovered by us "square men" that he was systematically falsifying his reports and pocketing the pay of several dummies regularly appearing in his composition accounts; also, that some ten girls who were setting the fat matter in a side room were of doubtful reputation, and the room was slyly referred to, even by his henchmen, as "Pinkerton's harem."

These facts having been laid before the management by a union committee. an investigation resulted in Pinkerton and his gang being incontinently fired. He was also arrested and forced to cough up some of his pilferings.

From that day the World has been, I believe, a staunch union office. So I can congratulate myself that the World is some better for my having lived.

Of course, I had to ask permission of Pinkerton to be placed on the sub list. He wanted to know where I worked last and I said on the San Francisco Press—which I trust was an excusable lie. He posted my name, and within a few minutes I was throwing in on No. 36

Next morning Pinkerton bawled out:

"Who worked on 36 last night?" I answered that I did.

"Come 'ere!" and on my arrival at the bullpen he asked:

"How long since you arrived from 'Frisco?"

"A week."

"Ever worked in New York before?"

"No."

"You are not a union man?"

"No."

"You look like you have the union brand on you somewhere, but I want to get rid of that d—d clam-catcher holding 36, and you may represent it until further orders. Mind your own business, and keep your mouth shut."

There was a daisy rule—that the dirtiest take had to correct the whole galley; and say, it was a corker! The blacksmiths would set type three hours and hammer the rest of the night. If this rule was intended to weed out the worst, it was all right. They soon got weary. In the next six weeks not a galley was passed to me.

One day I had my cases thrown in by a noted San Francisco forty-niner, who in the golden days was paid at the rate of $150 for six day's work at case. He had degenerated somewhat, but was still a good printer when not boozed. On this occasion he was pretty shaky and "mixed the babies up"

I did not read my sticks and that night a "take" full of typographical errors was passed to me. The proof as a whole was a sight. I corrected my matter, pulled my slug, and laid the galley alongside of the night foreman, explaining how my cases came to be foul and saying that as I had no anvil I could not correct the rest

It was my turn to get fired, but I heard nothing more of it, possibly for the reason that among the forty alleged printers there were not more than a dozen good ones—most of them "sneaks" like myself. (Among the latter was Arensburg, the "fast crab," who on a bet set nearly 2,200 of solid minion in sixty minutes.)

Manton Marble was the editor of the World. Horace Greeley was then editor of the Tribune, James Gordon Bennett—the elder—of the Herald, Charles A. Dana of the Sun and Raymond of the Times. What a galaxy! "Newspaper Row," or the world, never before or after saw such an array of brilliant writers within gunshot of each other, and at times all mad enough to shoot.

It was Mr. Marble's habit to prepare his copy during the day, attend a club or theater during the evening, and show up about 11 o'clock for proofs, and woe to the piker who delayed a galley.

One night an editorial severely criticizing General Daniel E. Sickles, the gallant one-legged civil war veteran, was run out. It was a day or two after the encounter in Washington in which General Sickles shot and killed Philip Barton Key for alleged intimacy with Mrs. Sickles, then a popular leader of Washington society. General Sickles himself had a past master's reputation as a gay Lothario and, as he was figuring in politics as a Republican, the article scathingly denounced the killing as the cowardly act of a disreputable bully.

I had emptied a small take of the stuff and was on "waiting time," when I noticed that the rodent on 37 was in trouble. Mr. Marble's manuscript was nearly as bad as Horace Greeley's "chow-chow," and, with a take before him 37 was leaning on his elbows in despair. Suddenly he said:

"Excuse me, but I've been to every man in the alley, and not one can read 'this piece,' or start it. Can you?"

I had glanced at the manuscript and saw at once that it was a pertinent quotation from "Richard III" which I could quote from memory.

"What's the matter with you?" I said "That copy is like re-print."

"Well, I don't know about that, but I do know I don't want to lose my situation, and will give you a dollar to take it off my hands."

"Dig up"

He handed over the price and reached for the copy, when I told him to leave it where it was. I then set the following, only referring to the manuscript a couple of times for feet and punctuation:

"Now are our brows bound with victorious
wreaths,
Our bruised arms held up as monuments;
Our stern alarms changed to merry meetings,
Our dreadful marches to delightful measures.
Grim-visaged war has smoothed his wrinkled
front,
And now, instead of mounting barbed steeds
To fright the souls of fearful adversaries,
He capers nimbly in a lady's chamber,
To the lascivious pleasing of a lute."

Fancy that poor rodent's astonishment when the proof came with that take in blank verse and not an error!

He never spoke to me again, knowing that I despised him; but his eyes haunted me for weeks like a board bill. Whenever I was working and he waiting for copy, I never turned without catching him gazing at me intently, as if I were a being of supernatural powers; and I surmise the ease with which I disposed of the manuscript and took his dollar was a mystery that he never solved or forgot.

Savannah Just After the War.

An all-around printer, and a good one, early in 1866 I was a new arrival at Savannah, Georgia, from New York City.

Savannah then had three dailies—the Republican, News and Advertiser. I began subbing on the News, and had in several strings, when a committee from the Republican chapel called on me. A serious business requiring immediate adjustment had arisen between the chapel and proprietor, and trouble was feared. New body-type had been put on, "minionette," alleged to be "minion," but it was four lines to the thousand less than minion and way under the scale. The boys were home-made (Georgia "crackers"), and, it being just after the war, knew more about filling "Yanks" with old type-metal than firing type at a galley; but it needed no wise guy from New York to tell them they were being handed something awful. What they wanted to know was what to do, as in such cases made and provided. They having passed it up to me, after careful measurements I suggested that if they would make up a scale nonpareil one way and minion the other it would be about the thing.

This plan worked, to the disgust of an "old spav" in the front office, who had been allowed to order the new dress upon representing to the proprietor that he could save him some money. The proprietor was not a practical printer or he would have known better.

Foreman Henry Middleton was in tribulation that day. The Johnny who held the ship-news case had thrown up his job, saying it was "too hard," and for the same reason no one around the office would have it. Plain reprint-pounders were those early-day "crackers." Mr. Middleton put me on the cases for that night, but the next day told me to keep them, and told me to use my own judgment as to style, so the department would be reasonably fat. Thenceforth 12,000 was an average string for the undersigned.

The Republican was owned by John E. Hayes, no doubt remembered by relics of the last generation as the intrepid war correspondent of the New York Tribune. At the front he was a tireless worker, and a wonder as a reporter, giving the most brilliant, complete and accurate accounts of battles, skirmishes and army movements; and, by sending them North by the first courier leaving headquarters with dispatches, he enabled the Tribune to scoop all competitors. People wondered how the Tribune managed to print the news one day ahead.

Hayes was solid with the generals and corps commanders, because he drew the line on strategical movements and they could trust him. This virtue made him a great favorite with General Sherman, with whom he marched through Georgia, and whose tent he is said to have often shared.

When Savannah capitulated he was one of the first to enter its lines, and in a few weeks was handing to its unrepentant citizens a first-class, red-hot Republican daily. This was made possible by his finding and the confiscation of a complete rebel newspaper plant that had been stored away early in the war, when newsprint ran short. General Sherman turned the plant over to Hayes, who went North and succeeded in digging up a prominent politician with money and an eye on a Georgia senatorship or something like that. While most of the people were still sullen, rebellious at heart, and not in need of Yankee papers, the city's business interests, stimulated by Northern capital, were rapidly reviving and afforded commercial patronage that went far toward paying the Republican's expenses.

Mr. Hayes, being an irrepressible secession hater, lost no opportunity to pump hot newspaper shot into the older rebels who were instrumental in forcing Georgia into the fight. One time he got more than he sent, as the sequel will show.

Just before hostilities began there were $40,000 of government funds in the Savannah postoffice, and the postmaster, Solomon by name, was relieved of the cash by a band of guerrillas. Solomon was one of the most prominent and respected of Savannah's citizens, but the Republican got after him, alleging that he had connived to turn the trust over to the confederacy. Hayes was sued for criminal libel. In the suit that followed it was proved that Solomon had repeatedly warned the authorities at Washington that the funds were in peril and asked to be relieved of the responsibility. The verdict was a fine of $1,000 or six months' imprisonment. Hayes argued that the $1,000 would be easy money and took the six months, writing his editorials from the county jail.

One night he sent in a "must" that made a column. It related that Professor Alexis, a noted far-eastern traveller, was a passenger on the English barque Hindu, reported in the shipping lists as arriving that day with a cargo of silks from Calcutta, India; that the professor had just spent several years in the interior of India and Tibet, during which he had by close investigation gained an insight into mysteries and occult wonders practiced by the mahatmas and fakirs; that among those of which the professor had practical knowledge was power to suspend the effect of flames and heat, by which, like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego of old, a possessor of this strange secret was enabled to pass through the fiercest flames unharmed; that the professor, being a former college chum and intimate friend of the editor, had been induced by Mr. Hayes to postpone his intended immediate departure for Washington, and at 10 o'clock on the following day would give a free exhibition of this miraculous power in the city park.

Next morning, in the center of the park, where ground had just been broken for the site of a public building, were piled five kerosene barrels. I have a vivid recollection of this fact, for, with the entire Republican gang, I wanted to be shown, and, when the "jig was up," instead of going to bed I had stayed up to see the sight. We marched to the park together, and had an excellent view of the barrels. Many people had arrived, and by 10 o'clock nearly every inhabitant except the halt and the blind was leaning on the fence or reclining on the green sward.

Overlooking the park was the county jail, and the editor's cell window. Seated at a table, he was apparently preparing copy, occasionally glancing at the crowd in an abstracted manner. The crowd viewed the formidable display of barrels in silence, no doubt awed by thoughts of the wonder about to happen. Darkies in droves looked on, wild-eyed, with a rabbit's foot in each hand.

But as 10 o'clock went by, and minute after minute elapsed with no sign of the professor, the crowd began to be restless. At about 10:30, a lank-looking Johnny slouched over to the center of attraction and gave one of the casks a kick. It was empty!

For a minute everybody stopped breathing. Then the Johnny mounted the barrel and shouted:

"Mr. Mayor, suh, I reckon this heah crowd has been fooled good and plenty. This bein' the 1st of April, when we-all can stand a little fun, I move you, suh, that we give three cheers for John E. Hayes." And say, those cheers were given with a hearty good will and a tiger.

The incident proved a capital advertisement for the Republican. From that day the editor had the passive good will at least of many natives to the manor born who before had hated him. Upon his release he went north for a respite, and incidentally to mend his finances.

Knowing that Mr. Hayes was hard pushed, and that his employees held him in high regard, as the holidays came on the Republican manager suggested that, unknown to the editor, we get up a Christman edition (newspapers were not published then on holidays) and turn the net proceeds over to him as an expression of our good will.

The scheme started in like a charm, and, so far as patronage was concerned, columns and columns of juicy advertising were secured in a day. Then we all worked overtime and, at the end of a week, on Christmas Eve, had all but the last pages printed of an edition, good at least, for the price of the editor's fine.

Then there came a crash. The last forms were being sent down when, just as they were put into the slide, the hoist rope broke and the next instant they were in the basement, a fearful mass of pi.

The situation was hopeless. The pied matter included the front page and most of the solid reading. With copy destroyed and everybody "all in," the pages could not be reproduced.

On Christmas Day there was a discovery that would make good stuff for "the denouement" of a novel. The sliderope being a new one, Mr. Middleton was at a loss to conceive how it could possibly have parted. Curiosity led him to examine the supposed broken ends, and the mystery was solved. The rope had been nearly severed with a sharp knife.

The old spav in the front office had opposed this enterprise from the beginning, and done everything he could to throw it. He was a dyed-in-the-wool "secesh" and hated Mr. Hayes. Also, as it proved, he was a past master in making a get-away, for after that dreadful Christmas he was never seen in Savannah again.

A Tourist's Strike.

Many old handsets, of the Northern states and Canada at least, remember when the Detroit Free Press went into the union junk heap—about 1868—the result of a strike that, as I have always believed, with a little diplomacy might have been avoided.

Just returned from the west, I caught on at the Free Press and threw in cases the very day of the walkout. Several times while distributing I noticed knots of the boys in earnest conversation, but had no idea of what was up. To this day I do not know the real inside of the differences that were breeding trouble; they had to do with small "fats" that belonged to the dead galley and were being lifted by the office.

It was nearly time that night—7 o'clock—when I rolled my sleeves. Not a light had been turned on, and as no one was present but a man at the stone I asked him what was the matter:

"I don't know yet," he replied, "but believe the printers have struck. They have had conferences with the proprietors, and there was a special union meeting this afternoon."

"This is news to me. I got in from the west last night. It's funny some one did not have the courtesy to tell me something about it. My place was at the meeting. Aren't you a member?"

"Yes." (It was Eugene Harmon, brother of John Harmon, the foreman.)

"How comes it, then, that you are here?"

"The—the—fact is, I think the boys are making a serious fuss about a small matter. They have made Manager Quimby very angry. I am not in sympathy with them."

"But a straight man has no right to set up an opinion against the will of the majority."

"Well, I'm here, you'll notice, and am going to stay with it if I have to get the paper out alone."

"Are you the foreman?"

"My brother is—or was—and I've been his assistant."

I reached for my coat.

"Say, I'll tell you how it is," he said. "I'm in the manager's confidence. If the boys have gone out they'll never get back. There are in waiting across the river about twenty Canadian typestickers, and we know of fifty more, east and west, to be had within twenty-four hours—enough to flood the city. I put John wise, but he wouldn't listen. You'd better set out those cases you filled, and can keep them."

"And you don't know anything about me—whether I'm a printer or a blacksmith. I'm not on the lookout for a proposition of that kind, from a man who would sneak his own brother out of a job."

He never seemed to like me after that, for whenever I met him on the street something caught his attention across the way. I might have been less personal if he had not looked the underhanded little cur that he was.

At the bottom of the stairs there were at least a dozen printers, all with skates on and all talking at once. One insultingly wanted to know if I had "taken a situation," and another who knew me knocked him down. I learned that by a close vote a strike had been declared; that the Tribune force was also out, more in sympathy than because of any serious grievance in that office, and that the union had upwards of $2,500 in its treasury. Two or three of the crowd were in fighting trim and shouting, "We'll make 'em come to time if it takes a year."

The remark of Eugene Harmon was prophetic. For many years after the

Free Press composing room was unfair, and for aught I know is to this day.

Next morning I took an early train for Oxford, fifty miles up the state, remaining there several days. On returning—would you believe it?—besides the Free Press being fully manned by outsiders, the Tribune was running full blast, with a force made up of strikers from both offices. The cases were not only all represented, but there were fifteen or twenty men standing around to be put on!

Among those at work was the one who insulted me, with a cheek slightly contused.

I took a turn around, and noticed that most of the men who had talked war and were going to die in the last ditch had their noses in the spacebox. Many of those looking on were men with families, among the best in the union, who had held cases in one office or the other for years. One told me he thought the grievance had been trivial, and was very much opposed to extreme measures; that the vote was carried by agitators who had been in the city but a short time, and strange as it might seem, nearly all the big orators were now at work.

It was me that about that time had on a big disgust.

I was well acquainted with some of the old Detroit boys, having worked there. One singled me out and asked me to go on. Though conditions did not look good I was needing money. Going to the cases with a handful, the first thing attracting my attention was a placard, hanging from the gaspipe, bearing in bold type this legend:

"Hereafter, any regular of this composing room employing a union printer as a substitute will be peremptorily discharged."

I hadn't thrown in a line, and didn't. Putting the type on the stone I said to Mr. Van Buren, the foreman, with whom I was well acquainted, "My regular is gone and his cases are vacant. I can't work under that card over there."

"Say, on the side, never you mind that thing. We had to put up the notice to pacify the manager. He was due to make some sort of bluff; I think within a week the cards will disappear. I haven't given out all the cases," and he gave me a significant look.

"Have those fellows who carried this strike renounced the union?"

"Ostensibly, yes; but you know how that goes. When matters cool down everything will be pretty much as before."

"But did you give them cases?"

"Yes; that is, between you and I there was a pressure brought to bear."

"In other words, they precipitated the strike as I was given to understand, and then crawled in out of the wet?"

"But, you understand, they won't last long;" and he closed an eye.

"Excuse me. I knew nothing whatever about this trouble, and am yet ignorant of the real facts; but it looks like there are a lot of printers here who need guardians. They must have meant all right, and done what they thought was for the best, so I don't want to criticize or want one of their jobs. Under the circumstances I might stand for that card a while, as you say; but when it comes to working with those two-edged fellows, I don't have to."

A week later I was in St. Louis, eating at Jim Hurley's printers' joint and subbing on the Times under that grand old man, Phil Coghlan.

The first night after my arrival in St. Louis—September 4, 1868—there were sixty deaths from cholera in the city. The morgue was in St. Charles street, opposite Hurley's. To and from it throughout the night heavy carts were rattling over the rough cobbled pavement. I did not know the cause until next morning; but dreamed of being a looker-on at the massacre of St. Bartholomew and of tumbrils carrying victims to the guillotine. A frost came next night, and four days later there was not a single new case of the disease.

Four Years in Gehenna.

This story relates a series of happenings that landed me in an ugly slough, from which I have never been able to fully extricate myself. It would be an interloper in a strictly jour printer's journal, nevertheless is at home among these reminiscences, as they include other events occurring while I was in the publishing business.

During 1879 and 1880, I was manager and editor for a printing company at Greenville, Mich. It issued a small daily and a country weekly—"organ"—and in connection there was a good steam job office. In my dual capacity I was supposed to supervise everything, keep the books and write a few columns daily.

Worn out and ill, early in 1881 I resigned the position and went to Colorado to spend a summer in the mountains.

I carried a letter of introduction to the late John Arkins, founder and proprietor of the Rocky Mountain News, from an old Mississippi chum and side partner of his. It at once gained me special consideration.

During a ride around Denver with Mr. Arkins I saw much of the city, and he asked my opinion of it. I had not noticed a single manufactory or other enterprise employing a permanent "dinner-pail squad," and said I must conclude that, while many fine buildings were being constructed, under such a condition the community was liable to ultimately eat itself up.

"Yes," said he, "but consider—Denver is the outfitting point for Leadville, the greatest mining district in the world, bar none, and also for many minor districts. Its mercantile and machinery business is simply marvellous; while just outside the city limits are great smelters, employing many hundreds of men. I make this prediction—within five years Denver will have the biggest boom the west has ever seen. If you have any money to invest, go out Broadway and buy acreage property, now selling at $200 an acre. I'll guarantee you can dispose of it as city lots within two years. Meantime, go into the mountains and take a rest, then come back and I'll give you a job at clipping state news."

Had I followed this advice I could now be clipping coupons.

To illustrate what followed in the boom line, this instance will suffice. A party owned a property on Fifteenth street that he tried in vain to sell for $2,500. Then he got mad, and swore that while he lived money would not buy it. He was "kidding," for within five years he disposed of it for $50,000 in cash.

Now listen to what was in store for poor miserable me:

I went to the mining camp of Pitkin, in the Gunnison country of Colorado. Pitkin is situated on Quartz creek, on the western slope of the Rocky mountains, nine miles below Alpine pass, at 9,300 feet above sea level.

I paid for being hauled over the summit—altitude 11,500 feet—in a lumber wagon alleged to have been a stage; but as the road had not been improved and was paved with boulders large as wagon wheels, was easily induced with the other passengers to walk most of the way.

At the apex of the summit we stopped to drink from a rivulet, the pure ice-cold water of which divided at our feet—a part meandering down the eastern slope to the Arkansas river and on to the Atlantic ocean, the rest flowing westward toward the Pacific. On the summit a sublime stillness reigned. It would have been supreme but for the roar of the stage, alleged as aforesaid, jumping from one boulder to another.

Among the passengers was old Hank Williams, once quite noted as an Indian scout at Fort Bridger, at this time a popular Pitkin hotel keeper, homing from a business trip. Hank was of under stature, but having grown fleshy in the inn business tipped the scales at 225 pounds. I shall always be grateful he was not seven feet high.

Those lofty altitudes get a fat man's breath. After walking awhile Hank fell among the rocks, gasping, and seemed about to ascend instead of descend. Volunteering assistance with another light weight like myself, we put him on his pins, and humping ourselves under his shoulders forged ahead occasionally, while the rest of the tenderfeet went on. It was a snail's journey of nearly a mile before Hank quit rolling his eyes and could breathe with his mouth closed. (This sketch will refer to him again.)

Thus I crossed the great Alpine pass into the Gunnison. This pass—afterwards traversed by the South Park railroad, is about twenty miles west of the celebrated Marshall pass, which was the route of the Denver and Rio Grande railroad for years before its broad guage line via Leadville was built.

The Alpine greatly surpasses Marshall pass for scenic beauty—in fact there are few elevations along the Rockies where the view is more magnificient as one catches his first glimpse of the western valley far beneath. The South Park train, emerging from a tunnel 1,800 feet in length, directly passes over a dizzy construction hundreds of feet high, then creeps down a steep grade blasted into the granite mountain side, twisting around sharp curves that often swing the engine into view from the coach windows. Along the bottom of the great canyon flows Quartz creek, a roaring cataract, but looking from the summit like a tiny ribbon of silver, and in view for many miles. To the right is Mt. Fairview, elevation 13,500 feet, while scattered in the distance, right and left, are scores of lesser peaks, some far to the southwest in old Mexico. Long before, in the Sierras, I had had all hankering for mountain air and scenery bumped out of me; but I shall never forget the awe with which for the first time I drank in the sublimity of this Alpine view.

At Pitkin, in the evening of the very day of my arrival, I witnessed a moving display that was grand beyond description, fearful as it was grand and calculated to dull recollection of the nature wonders just passed.

Along the creek on both sides are ridges 1,000 to 2,500 feet in height. The fact that in winter the sun rises at 10 o'clock and sets at 2 best tells how Pitkin is situated, "in a deep vale shut from the rude world by Alpine hills."

The ridges in those days were covered with a dense growth of fir, the foliage of which burns like fat pine. By the creek some careless camper had failed to smother the fire over which he cooked his evening meal. Fanned by a stiff breeze, it spread to underbrush, then to the fir trees, and within an hour thousands of acres of forest were in flames with tongues leaping upwards hundreds of feet, and roaring like a Niagara. Viewed from the creek's level it seemed more awful than the orthodox hell the parsons used to tell about.

It was a sight to hold a spectator transfixed, though few of the citizens were looking on open-mouthed. They gathered en masse as near the creek as heat would permit, to fight fire should the flames leap across. However, besides the burning of a couple of shacks on the east side, no damage to the camp resulted.

The wind dying down, in a couple of hours the fire had spent its force and the eastern ridge side, bereft of its emerald beauty, was a blackened, smouldering ruin.

I found that Mr. Nathaniel Slaght and family of Greenville had preceded me to Pitkin on a few weeks visit. Mr. Slaght was president of the Michigan Mining and Milling company of Pitkin, and owned large mining interests. By the way, he was also president of the Greenville Printing company. In the piney lumber woods of Michigan he had made more money than he needed, and maybe thought there was no better way to get rid of the surplus than by dabbling in mines and running a jim crow print shop. Anyway, with that object in view it was a great combination, for he came to want.

There were two ends to Pitkin—"up town" and "down town"—with a dead line between. The lower end was pretty much run by a fraternity of jealous miners, most of them meaning well but dominated by designing fanatics eaten by the impression that they were always being imposed upon or slighted by sharpers on the other side of the dead line. Up town a coterie of bright, influential business men were prominent in local affairs, and usually made matters pertaining to town organization come their way.

Up-town, however, were a number of disagreeable characters that I soon learned to fight shy of. One was Frank Sheafor, owner of the camp paper—the Independent. He was a bad actor. Bred in Kansas, after reading many yellow novels he yearned to go to the far west and pose as a sure-enough "bad man." He was of the proper stuff; for like most characters of that class, when put to the test he proved himself a sneaking coward—of which his beady black eyes set too near together gave warning. I learned that when he came to the camp his black hair flowed down his back, Buffalo Bill style, from under a wide sombrero, and from his hip pocket protruded a formidable gun; and a long, turned-up moustache completed his ferocious aspect.

To get this story on its feet I must here inject some stuff that may prove wearisome.

The printing office was located uptown, and the editor posed as an up-town man, though secretly standing in with the lower-town gang. As the paper was habitually booming a lot of worthless mining claims—no doubt for pay—the better element wanted to be rid of Sheafor. Through the Greenville push my reputation as a newspaper man had become known, and so it presently came about that I was being urged to buy him out. Having a big load of disgust on for the business, and little money, I steadfastly declined until an influence was brought to bear that made me fall over myself on the other tack.

It was this way: The main cause of jealousy at this time was a fight for the railroad depot location. Down-town was ideal level ground for the yard—the best in camp. The up-town influence, however, had secretly prevailed on the South Park company to accept a large donated site. It was within a hundred yards of the Independent office. Also, a company had been quietly formed and made plans and specifications for the erection of a large hotel on a corner lot next to the printing office, and would need the ground on which it stood.

Here was a chance for me to gather in a few thousand sheckels that summer, without much of an effort. Then Mr.

Slaght came to me and said: "I would like to have you buy out that man Sheafor, for my good as well as your own. We are going to make a lot of money here, and you ought to be in on it. Assuming that after your late troubles (my home had been desolated by death) you may be short of funds, I will draw a check in your favor for $3,000. As a matter of business you may give me a note and trust deed; but if things don't come your way I will tear up the note." I fell.

Sheafor came off for a round price. Then I put in a new jobber, the freight on which was more than its cost, a paper cutter, job type, etc., and started in about $5,000 in debt.

Sheafor agreed to keep out of the business for two years; but no sooner was the deal closed than he went to Denver, bought a new outfit, and using a couple of his near-eyed cronies as alleged publishers, started a new paper with himself as editor and manager. I then learned that in law he could not sell his right to "work and earn a livelihood."

The first business stroke of the "editor and manager" was to circulate among the lower-town people and whisper that he had sold the Independent to the "up-town gang"—that I was a mere tool. So I got orders from many business men to cut their advertising space in half, as they were going to patronize both papers; also, most of the down-town subscribers switched.

At this time a great extension race was on between the South Park and Rio Grande railroads, from the continental divide to Gunnison City (county seat), distance thirty-five miles. Gunnison was then a booming city, claiming 8,000 to 10,000 population.

The lead was highly important, on account of pick of right-of-way through narrow places in the valley. The South Park was safely ahead, until it began to run its 1,800-foot tunnel. Then it went to sleep. The Rio Grande shot ahead, and soon it became known that the South Park had suspended work until the following year. Pitkin as I have already stated was on the South Park route.

It was about July 1, 1882, that the first engine rolled into the camp. Meanwhile, one-half of the population had become discouraged and pulled out. The claims had proved disappointing. A vast upheaval in the remote past had faulted the mineral veins. This being demonstrated, Pitkin was no longer talked about as "a poor man's camp." Many veins were rich, but uniformly disappeared at fifty to seventy-five feet depth, so capital was necessary to rediscover them.

I am getting a little ahead of one of the main features of this over-true story —illustrating as it does, more than any other circumstance that ever came under my observation, the extreme ups and downs which frequently occur in the pursuit of mining as a business, and the childish breaks made by people who invest in prospects and stocks on the say-so of designing sharks, without knowing the difference between pay rock and a grindstone. It is necessary to briefly give these details as they had much to do with the unmaking of yours truly.

The Michigan company, consisting of Mr. Slaght and some of his Canadian relatives and friends, owned the Silver Islet and other claims of lesser importance. About 1,200 feet of development work had been done on the great low-grade vein of the Silver Islet, as a result of which it had become quite famous as a prospective producer of great wealth.

A California syndicate sent an expert to examine the property with the view of purchasing it. He was permitted to spend several days in the tunnels and drifts, and ship out a dozen sacks of ore samples for testing.

Mr. Slaght's special business in the mountains at this time was to meet representatives of the syndicate and arrange a deal. A formal offer had been made by letter of $650,000 for the property, and Mr. Slaght very sensibly wanted to sell. But he had also received a fool letter from the Canadian contingent, that proved ruinous to them all. They had carefully and prayerfully considered the offer, and decided it was not enough. Swelled up by grossly exaggerated reports and comments in the Independent, also reports made by the local manager, they had become seized of the idea that the Silver Islet was worth at least a million, and objected to letting it go for less.

As I entered the manager's office one morning, Mr. Slaght sat there with the Canadian letter in his hand and laughing.

"I'm afraid we're making a mistake," he said, "but we'll hold it for their price; or work it ourselves. Not one of those people knows what the tenth part of a million means."

He owned three-fourths of the stock, and could have closed the deal, making the mistake of his life in deferring to their wishes. The sale or success of the Silver Islet would have saved kind, whole-hearted Mr. Slaght from ultimate bankruptcy, and me, indirectly, from the hell that followed. Within five years the Silver Islet, together with a small mill that had been built in connection, actually sold at sheriff's sale for $7,500, and passed out of the hands of the company.

The property was managed by an old Baptist parson who, after forty years of sky piloting and living on the collection game, was sent by the prayerful Canadians to show Pitkin how to exploit and run a mine. His plan was niggardly economy—which soon got the whole camp down on him and the company, and he was "back capped" at every turn.

With a forty-ton mill properly handled the company could have soon been paying dividends; but the parson, after monkeying around a year to save a few dollars, started up a second-hand plant with a capacity that never reached more than ten tons a day. It cost more than a new one of proper size ought to, and more to run it.

Mr. Slaght was at length obliged to shut pan on his private funds, following which the property closed down, the parson went home, and everything that didn't flatten out caved in.

Before I had been in Pitkin a month a sensational incident occurred—a reminder of the sort of justice meted out in the California hills and along the far-western frontiers in the early days. I am inclined to believe it was the best way that could have been devised in the wild and woolly times to hold crime in check, though in many cases it was administered by blood-stained criminals, more deserving of violence than their victims, and great injustice was done.

In the upper section of Pitkin, outside of the town limits, was a large dance hall, infested by painted fairies and toughs, and thronged nightly by miners and more or less respectable citizens taking in the "sights." A murder had been committed there, and fights, robberies and holdups were of frequent occurrence.

The down-town element, albeit having pretty tough joints of their own—may be to ward off attention from their own short-comings, anyway to twist the noses of upper-town moralists—one night made a raid on the den.

A mob of about one hundred, headed by my esteemed contemporary with a gun in each hand shooting in the air, marched up the main street and a gathering crowd followed.

In the exercises ensuing the dance hall proprietor was shot, and many heads were broken and noses flattened. A can of coal oil was upset in the building and it went up in smoke.

This episode reminded me of the early days' vigilance committee of San Francisco, partly composed as it was of desperate characters bent on perforating the skins of other desperadoes to save their own. The biggest cowards were the most blatent leaders until there was something doing. Then, like my esteemed contemporary, they sneaked to the rear where they could look on with safety.

Among the crowd following up the Pitkin "vigilantes" was my foreman, James Lamoreaux—one of the assets turned out to me with the office. I had been warned to keep an eye on Jim—that he was secretly standing in with Sheafor, and would do me dirt. My good angel was guessing.

Overhearing a couple of Sheafor's near-eyed pals talking about a plan to squelch the "up-town organ" and its editor when the mob came back, Jim promptly took measures to forestall anything of that kind. Next morning the first thing that attracted my attention was a stack of rifles in one corner of the office. Jim had called together a lot of up-town boys, who during the night laid concealed within gunshot. As I learned afterwards, when half a dozen leaders of the dance-hall raid on their way back came to a halt near the office, and were busily whispering, Jim walked up to them and said:

"Will you fellows take the advice of a friend?"

"What is it, Jim?"

"Don't undertake to do up the Independent."

"What do you mean?"

"No use of being mysterious—it's all all over camp."

"Well, what of it?"

"I give you credit for better sense than to make such a d—d fool break; but if you do, you'll stir up something you ain't looking for. Keep an eye on Nob hill."

(This hill was the "tony" part of camp, and overlooked my office.)

The advice was heeded.

Jim Lameroux was a character. Medium-sized, gaunt, quick as a flash, a bundle of muscle and a stayer, he was a born fighter any style—fisticuffs being his strong suit though he was known to always carry a gun. He seldom quarreled when not in liquor—then with most any tough that showed up. He invariably downed his man, would pretty near cry if he did not give him a pair of black eyes. When the melee was over, he would ask if there was anybody looking on who was aching for the same. Nearly all his knuckles were enlarged or skewed, in token that he struck from the shoulder.

Jim was a bum printer, but his knowledge of mining and minerals was valuable to me. Within a week after I "moved in" he was my solid friend; and though he came near licking the "old man" once, as it proved I never had a truer friend.

Next morning after the dance-house raid I dropped into A. M. Stevenson's law office. "Stevy," as he was familiarly called, was a nervy young fellow—especially in attempting to practice law at that time with his scant knowledge of it.

As I entered he was loading a revolver. A caller asked:

"What's that for, Stevy?"

"I'm going to kill Frank Sheafor."

"You don't mean it."

"Watch me. He has threatened to do me up, I hear, and last night after the fire sneaked up the trail with a gun in his hand, nearly scaring my wife into a fit. There were half-a-dozen boys in the brush near by, guarding the printing office, and it was lucky for him that he turned and sneaked back. I don't believe any court would hold me for ridding the world of that thing. Anyway, I'm going to chance it."

Without another word Stevy walked down the street, and was within twenty rods of the new office when Sheafor came out and climbed into the Gunnison stage, on his way to Denver. (There had been talk of arrest and trouble for the ringleaders of the raid.) On his return a week later the ruffle was out of Stevy's feathers, and talk of prosecution had quieted down.

The county election of 1882 afforded Pitkin a little relief from the apathy and gloom that was closing in on it, following a steady decrease in population and business. Some money was put in circulation by political committees and candidates. For the purposes of my story, I will only refer to the contest for county judge.

Ed. C. Colborn, the Republican nominee, was elected. He was a rather dudish, Johnny-come-lately looking chap about shoulder-high to an average man, but knew enough to be hale fellow well met with the pick and shovel contingent. While he could make a pointed speech, he had a voice thin as a tape line, that shot past the audience and out through the transom without attracting much attention.

For his opponent he had D. T. Sapp of Pitkin, a former Greenville man and Stevenson's law partner. He was an excellent attorney, as Colborn afterwards proved himself to be.

Mr. Slaght dropped into my office one day and said:

"We must do all we can to elect our old friend and 'towney,' Mr. Sapp."

"Yes; but you know I can do no more than vote for him," I replied. "He's on the wrong ticket. The paper is straight as a string in this election."

"Ah, shucks! In this God-forsaken country, what do you care? Don't go back on your best friends for the sake of politics. For special and legitimate reasons I want Sapp elected. If you will help him all you can with the paper I'll cancel $500 of your indebtedness to me."

In gratitude for this generosity and kindness, I wrote an editorial and quietly submitted it to Sapp for his approval. It said many things in his favor, but underneath was distinctly a vein of equivocation, much more apparent, as it proved, than was intended. He was a comparative stranger in the county. The article described him as a man of energy and action in the right direction, but unfortunately of manner so reserved and peculiar as to convey the impression that he estimated himself rather above the common run of people—which was strictly true.

This comment made him wince but he said he felt that it was deserved and fair; that the matter as a whole was excellent, and thanked me. Later in the campaign he said:

"Mr. Graham, I'm sorry that d—d stuff was printed. Wherever throughout the county I have mingled with crowds of miners and working men I have distinctly felt it. Its influence crept over me like a chill."

If there is any person an intelligent miner cannot abide it is a man in a boiled shirt who looks contemptuously at a fellow mortal whose calling compels him to take his life in his hands and go down into the earth to toil. Most miners are well read, many educated. They have reason to know that their practical knowledge of minerals and rocks often proves more valuable than the theories and opinions of book-learned geologists.

My unfortunate comments may have turned from my old friend a hundred votes. Colborn's majority was forty-nine, and he was the only Republican candidate elected.

A few months ago, on one of Salt Lake's streets, Judge Colborn was standing at the curb, talking to a young gentleman. As I approached them he said:

"My son, I want you to know my old friend, J. B. Graham. Thirty-years ago he wrote an editorial that elected me judge of Gunnison county."

That meeting gave me a jolt, such a reminder it was of the flight of time. I had never seen young Colborn, now a prosperous business man, born five years after the defeat of Sapp.

In the spring of 1883 Pitkin had dwindled to less than half its size of two years before, and disgusted others were pulling out almost daily. It had little ore to ship, and there were few pay rolls. The freighters had disappeared, and nearly every dollar in circulation sooner or later found its way to the railroad freight hopper, never to come back. The only resources were funds sent in for mining assessment labor and the occasional sale of a mineral prospect to some outsider.

Speaking of newspaper mining reports, which in camp booming times have perhaps more than any other influence been the cause of wealthy men losing their heads and poor people being parted from their hard-earned money, I have had many compliments paid me for the conservativeness with which my mining news was prepared. Here is a case in point:

Early in 1883 a company composed of successful Black Hawk (Gilpin county, Colo.) miners sent an expert to examine a Pitkin claim that was located the first of the year, and which had been regularly mentioned in the papers as making a great showing and improving as depth was gained. I took pains to visit the ground often, wading in snow shoulder deep rather than trusting to current rumors. It belonged to the down-town push, and Sheafor of course was booming it with black type.

The Black Hawk company found everything better than the Independent had represented, closed a deal, and sunk a shaft to 100 feet depth. Then they made the fatal mistake of shipping in a mill—trusting to chances as to what was underneath. As it proved, not ten feet below the 100-level the shaft went into broken and barren rock.

One day along in the summer the manager came to my office. Said he: "We have abandoned our property here and are starting today to move out the mill. I have taken pains to call on you to say that while we were first attracted here by your reports, and have sunk thousands of dollars, we are far from blaming you. All your statements were correct. We were over-enthusiastic, and made the fool mistake of putting a mill on undeveloped ground. Wiseacres now say it is a gash vein. I contend not. There is a big fault, and I believe that by drifting north and east we might recover a true fissure; but that would soon run us out of our ground. I am disgusted, and will take no further chances."

In after years his theory as to the faulting proved correct.

I speak of the failure of this enterprise particularly as it was typical of what happened to others, lured by some of the best of the Pitkin surface showings of that day.

The locating of the Black Hawk property is worth telling, as it came very near, resulting in a tragedy. It was originally staked as the Black Prince location, and sold to eastern parties. Failure of so many claims in the district to make good caused the owners to be neglectful, and they having overlooked the assessment work in 1882, on the 1st of January, 1883, according to law the Black Prince was "jumpable."

Many miners knew of the fact, and as the ground was very promising, it was not strange that two parties of half-a-dozen each secretly planned to be on the location at exactly low 12 New Year's eve and take possession.

They approached the spot noiselessly, by trails on opposite sides of the hill, and hid in adjacent brush. On "the prick of 12" the two parties jumped into the open simultaneously. Several rifles glistened in the bright moonlight and that blood did not flow was only due to the leaders recognizing each other.

"Hello, Bill, what are you geezers a doin' here, this time o'night?"

"Since you have mentioned the subject, Sluffky, we'd like to know what the h—ll you geezers are here fer."

"Well, I reckon since we're all good friends there ain't no use of us bein' mysterious. Let's have a talk."

After some discussion they concluded to divide the Black Prince, each party taking half a claim. One-half of the claim was then named the "Midnight," the other the "Moonlight," and it was the Midnight and Moonlight that three months later caught the Black Hawk crowd.

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The spring of 1884 had the gloomist, most hopeless outlook of all seasons in my experience. Not only was it dark for myself—about everyone remaining in Pitkin had the blues. But two or three business men held their own—many had gone broke. The winter had been unusually cold and stormy, accentuating the general deadness. Not more than 500 people were left, and there was no work. Drummers had learned to give the station the go-by, and only now and then a lone passenger stepped from a train.

Dreadful snowslides were frequent; many trails were too dangerous to be risked. One slide a short distance above camp swept away a South Park section house, killing thirteen of its seventeen occupants. Stories of the dreadful suffering of a rescue party that had to break trail in several feet of snow, while the mercury marked 40 degrees below, were as nothing compared with a sight of the twelve frozen bodies they brought back and laid side by side on the counter of a vacant store. Of the rescued two were women, unharmed—one, the mother of seven sons, all section men, all killed by the slide.

When April came, snow lay on the main street to the depth of seven feet on the level, and there was not the track of a team nor had there been all winter. Here and there were beaten trails from one sidewalk across to the other. They were breast high, so that a person passing on the opposite walk could barely be seen, as through a trench.

Occasionally there was something doing socially, in the way of card parties and dances, and even a wedding now and then. A masquerade ball was given for the one parson in camp, who had mighty lean picking. Probably the best ad it got was this squib, appearing in the Independent:

> "Anent the coming masquerade, here is a hint for our esteemed contemporary, suggested by his beady, reptilian lamps. All he has to do to win first prize is to put on a hood and go in as a cobra."

The item caused some talk, but did not bring the dose of lead I was yearning for as a cure for depressed spirits."

With almost daily storms, and on a diet principally of sowbelly and beans that had prevailed for several hundred meals, I failed to get a glimpse of anything cheerful in the environments. Besides, the altitude had affected me so I could not sleep. It was just awful.

I turned the Independent over to a printer, and in a state of nervous prostration, with a railroad pass and the price of a week's feed, went to Denver for a month's layoff.

One of the first men I met there was former Senator H. A. W. Tabor, famous in the history of the early days of Leadville. He invited me to his office and asked:

"Just in from Pitkin?"

"Yes."

"Reports say the Gunnison country is fearfully dead—nothing but sagebrush and jackrabbits there. What do the people live on?"

"Beans and hardtack are pretty good."

"Any mining at all?"

"About the only dirt thrown is when we dig a grave."

"Plenty of snow?"

"Yesterday morning it laid a foot higher than my windows."

"How long will you stay with us?"

"A month, if the hotel man don't chase me out."

"Why don't you get out of Pitkin and go to Aspen, or some other live camp? A man of your ability—I say it without flattery—with half a chance ought to do well in the newspaper business."

"I'm stuck—staying with it to protect the interests of others, who helped me," I replied. "Every man over there believes the district has a big boom coming. If I should show the white feather now and a strike is made, I could never look my friends in the face again."

Saying I would call again, I arose to go. The senator was at the table writing but came and handed me an envelope, saying he hoped the contents might do me a good turn and added:

"I am not in politics now, but would be an ingrate to forget the the walloping the Independent gave our Arapahoe (Denver) delegation last fall for the stab in the back it gave me. And I have admired the Pitkin mining news reprinted in the dailies from your columns. Whenever there was a little strike made you did not slop over and talk about a second Leadville. Several outfits tried to draw me into Pitkin claims that haven't panned out, and the fact of their 'marvellous discoveries' not being so mentioned by the Independent, did not help them. The 'Tabor' group of claims, named for me, if you please, did not catch me for the price of a stack of chips."

Then I related my experience with a party who had tried to work him—how one of them came to my office, and remarked with an almond-eyed leer they had noticed I wasn't printing much about their great strike, which was, of course, my privilege, but added:

"I warn you now—if you haven't anything good to say for us, it will be just as prudent not to say anything."

At my hotel, on opening the envelope, I found it contained a fat check and a month's pass to the Tabor grand opera house.

Those who remember back thirty-five years may recall the lurid career of Mr. Tabor, that gave him national notoriety—how he discovered the Little Pittsburg mine at Leadville and became a millionaire in a day; how he was appointed a United States senator to fill a thirty-day vacancy, and while at Washington married a noted beauty from Leadville—the ceremony being attended by a blare of trumpets and followed by a princely feast at which cabinet officers and senators were guests. But much that was said at the time and afterwards uncomplimentary to Mr. Tabor was mere newspaper gossip. He was a long way from being all bad. More than any other man he aided in the early upbuilding of Denver, erecting several fine business blocks, and aided every worthy project for the city's advancement. He was a good business man, honest and square in politics. His besetting sin was political ambition, which unprincipled schemers took advantage of to rob him right and left, and he died leaving little for his heirs to quarrel over. His wife, whom the world said married him for his wealth, stayed with him to the end—in adversity his truest friend.

When the campaign of 1884 was on, there was at least something doing in Pitkin politically. Cleveland had been nominated against Blaine, a lively state contest was impending that meant the tapping of a barrel of money, and in Gunnison county the Democratic court house ring, as the then county officers were called, were scheming and working regardless of expense to succeed themselves. As it proved, they had to.

In the county were eleven newspapers —nine alleged to have been Republican and two Democratic. One of the first things the ring did was to change this lineup, so that when the papers got down to work, behold, nine were Democratic and two Republican. The Gunnison Daily Press and the Independent were true to their colors. Sheafor switched of course and got his share of the pie.

If the opposition had got down to active work early, there might have been a different result than what happened. In the last week of the fight it was shown by sworn statements that whereas at the end of four years in office from the organization of the county, the Republicans had left a debt of $77,500, the Democrats in two and one-half years increased the indebtedness to nearly $500,000, during which a tax of 26 mills was levied. Much of the debt thus increased was over legal limit. The county was flooded with worthless warrants—said by the "ins" to have been mostly issued on account of road building.

In the face of these facts the ring ticket was elected. How the trick was turned, the methods by which Pitkin was changed from a nominal Republican majority to fifty for the the ring will illustrate. It may also give a pointer to future combinations of patriots wherever, who have either to win out or go to the pen.

Though all the saloons had been bought up, on the day before election several barrels of villainous free whisky were rolled into camp, and 500 $2 bills were placed on tap at the local bank. During election day, on every trail to camp, were placed "workers" with flasks and "rolls," and as the miners came down to vote each was handed a jolt and a little spending money. When the polls closed the whole camp was so drunk there was only here and there a man who could swear how he voted.

"And then it snowed."

My last hope was dissolved and became thin air by the election result—otherwise a political handout now and then might have tided me over. With hardly the price of white paper in sight it was impossible to longer float the Independent. So a couple of days after the polls closed, without a farewell word to my subscribers—most of whom were owing me—I packed my grip, and leaving the office exactly as it was when the last paper was run off, turned the key over to Mr. Slaght's agent and boarded a train, never again to see Pitkin—I hope. The office building, for which in 1881 I paid $1,200, could possibly have been sold in 1884 for $75. My total assets were a railroad pass and $14 in cash. Liabilities nearly $9,000.

When my esteemed contemporary started his new sheet, he boasted among his cronies that he would "run the tenderfoot over the divide within ninety days." As things turned out, I now devoutly wish he had. It was the irony of fate that beckoned me to Pitkin, then fettered me. Sheafor hit the trail when he had eaten his election money. Just fancy his calling me a tenderfoot, when I had roughed it on the Comstock twenty years before!

At Denver my first work was digging from the space box $200, with which to discharge an overdue note to the American Type foundry. Shortly after the payment John Creswell, their agent, came to me and said he had told the company of the circumstances under which the note had been paid, and in return was authorized to say that whenever I wanted a new plant I could have it on my own time and without interest.

About ten days after I crawled out of "Gehenna," a most kind letter came from Mr. Slaght: "Don't lose your grip," he said. "Keep a stiff upper lip. Browse around until you are rested up. Don't go back to the mountains. Find some growing town in the valley that needs a paper and I'll start you in it with a new outfit—for a daily if you want it. You will come out on top."

That letter was an outpouring of sympathy, good will and good fellowship, straight from the heart of one of God's noblemen. At that very time Mr. Slaght was at his wit's end to stave off his own importunate creditors.

I had to reply that, while deeply grateful for his disinterested kindness, I was disgusted with trying to get ahead in the publishing business and would go back

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to my old trade, probably not to leave it again.

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Between Pitkin's gobs of gloom were many streaks of sunshine.

There were weeks and months together of cloudless skies. The pure mountain air, charged with health-giving ozone, was exhiliarating; the grand scenery was uplifting—if one could only live on it. With gun and hook and line, the sportsman could load his table with game and "speckled beauties."

The hills seemed full of mineral, for there was rich float everywhere; and wherever two or three were gathered together discussing the outlook it was rarely they dispersed without expressing renewed hope that the future had great things in store. Then, more than other communities, all mining camps are favored with a devil-may-care, happy-go-lucky class, who see the bright side of everything, whose cheeriness and fun brace up the faint-hearted, and tend to banish forebodings and borrowed troubles.

I recall many side incidents, funny and otherwise, that happened while I was running the Independent.

Most people never tire of listening to the strange antics of mountain rats. I have wondered at the wherefore of their cussedness, in the quaint huts of the ancient cliff dwellers and in mining tunnels a thousand feet underground. They cannot steal the hole a miner has drilled for a shot, but content themselves with filling it with their droppings while he is off shift.

George Barker, hardware merchant, was easily the dude of the camp, but rated a good fellow. Included in his well-kept togs was a pair of fancy dancing pumps, that he took great pride in wearing at all the public hops.

One night when there was to be a big event George rigged himself up in gorgeous array—of course hoping to "witch sweet ladies" with his swell slippers. Reaching under the bed for them, he was amazed to find one was filled with oats. His sleeping room, at the back of the store, was kept locked and the only way to account for the difilement was to assume that some one had used a pass key. With blood in his eye he accused the clerk of having become too d——d familiar in entering his private room and playing this dirty trick. An old miner who sat by the fire warming his shins, let George blow off a while, and then suggested "rats," which explained the mystery. They did a clean job, dropping not a kernel or a speck of dust on the floor or in the other shoe.

The Independent in its next issue undertook to give a cheerful account of the incident, stating the grain was emptied into a four-quart measure and filled it level full. The item did not seem so funny to me when George, who prided himself on his small feet, ordered out his ad.; and it was six months before he came back.

Late one fall a couple of prospectors went up one of the trails to do some assessment work, taking a months' grub and supplies. Included was a box of stearine candles, necessary in underground work, which were duly stored under the bed. On going to the box one day it was found that every candle had disappeared. This was a serious matter, for not a lick of work could be done without, and lack of them meant a long tedious trip through deep snow for a new supply.

Near by was the cabin of a young fellow also doing assessment work—the only other person on the mountain so far as the boys knew. He had picked up a bad reputation by being suspected of various and sundry light fingered tricks. They having no doubt that he was the candle thief, caught up a rope and started for his place, bent on summary vengeance. If he had taken half they could have forgiven him, but hogging all was too much. His cabin was nearly bare of supplies and comforts, but behold, under his cot was found a big pile of candles neatly stacked up. Just as the discovery was made the supposed thief came in from his tunnel. He stood amazed, and for a minute not a word was spoken. Then one of the boys said:

"Frank, if you've got anything to say or a message to leave, spit it out, 'cause were going to string you good and plenty. What made you take all we had?"

He hesitated a moment, then his eyes filled with tears.

"It's about those candles I presume," he began. "They are not mine, and so help me God, I never saw them until now."

"Don't talk off that-a-way, neighbor. What do you take us for? Don't waste your time?"

"I'm not caring so much what you do with me," he continued, indifferent to the interruption, but don't make a bad break."

He drew a knife from his pocket and threw it down.

"I'm not afraid of both on ye, when it comes to a show down; but let's look into this here business. Wouldn't I be a d——d fool to crib all your stock, when I could have took part and probably you wouldn't have known anything about it? Now I've this to say: Since my old mammy died last spring I've been different from what I was. Since then, if either on ye have heard a word agin me it was onjust. I've been thinking of hiking back to God's country as soon as I can, but if this 'ere ain't cleared up right, you may do what you please with me an' I won't kick."

He was so seriously in earnest the boys decided to look the ground over, though confident nothing would come of it.

The three started for the other cabin, to begin a search from there. On the way they noticed that the only visible footprints between the two cabins were those just made; but a few feet above this trail was a nearly straight line in the snow that might have been made by dragging a shovel handle. When this mysterious line was traced to the boy's cabin and to a small hole between the logs, one of them suddenly threw up his hands and exclaimed:

"Well, damn my skin if it wasn't rats!"

Then there was hand-shaking and cigars for three, followed by the best dinner the place afforded. After that the supposed thief and his accusers were inseparable friends—like the "Three Guardsmen," "One for all and all for one."

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An old miner who had some claims in Skeleton gulch one afternoon went down to camp for supplies, leaving his partner, a young tenderfoot, alone in their new cabin. It was an all-night trip, as the trail was bad. The young man was a "skeery" duck, and would shy even when the gruesome name of the gulch was mentioned.

On returning in the morning the old man found his partner in a frenzied state, with his personal belongings packed and ready to pull out. He said the place was haunted, relating how shortly after he turned in strange noises began and continued at intervals all night, and he had laid shivering in a cold sweat and with covered head listening to them. It seemed to him, he said, like murderous weapons were being dropped from the roof, dragged the length of the floor and dropped again into a cavern.

The old man laughed loud and long.

"Why, yer hair is standin' on end yet, kid," he said, "an' dang my buttons if I don't believe its' a turnin' gray, all on account of rats."

Then he went to where there was a knothole in the floor, pried up a board and brought forth spoons, knives and forks that a thieving rodent had taken from the table.

As he stood by the stove turning flapjacks for breakfast the old man eyed the knothole and mused:

"Blessed if I'll ever tell what satisfaction those rascally divils git outen hankey pankey plays like that 'ere. They can't eat 'em, that's certain.

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Along in the winter of 1883 a couple of tenderfeet, lured by reports of rich diggings, tramped into camp and planned to stay there until spring and try their luck.

A tinhorn and bad actor, lying around broke and unable to get away, conceived an audacious scheme to work the new arrivals, and at once set about it. Just onside the town limits was an immense conglomerate rock the length of a small cabin. Having a gable like a roof, in shape it presented a striking resemblance to a dwelling. It was under several feet of snow—not a color of rock being in sight—and to complete the likeness some one had crawled up at the rear and crowned it with a joint of stovepipe.

"Red" asked the strangers to have something at his expense, and stood off the barkeep.

"Are you boys going to stay here some time?" he asked.

"Yes; we plan to try prospecting for a while," said one.

"That so? Well you'll make it all right. Lots of gold around here. Stopping at a hotel?"

"Yes."

"You ain't on. What's the use of getting shut of your plunks that way, when there's nothing to do an' you can bach for a fraction of the cost? Get a little cabin. Then you'll have not only a place of your own to turn into, but it won't cost much and you can save the price in a few weeks."

"We've been thinking about doing that very thing."

"Do it sure. Here, barkeep, let's have another—this is my birthday. By George, sorry I didn't meet you fellows sooner. I've got just the little shack you want, but will leave for Denver on the early train, to be gone a month on county business. You see (in an undertone) I'm a deputy sheriff."

The suckers said they were very sorry, having no doubt they would want the place.

"I just completed it before the snow came but didn't move in, expecting to go out for the winter. It's 10 by 14, built of hewed logs, tight as a drum; has a shake roof, two windows, battened door, no floor—seldom need floors in camp cabins; and there's a good lot."

One of the strangers then treated, after which Red took them out in the bright moonlight to see his place, saying it wasn't locked and they might want to examine it during his absence. He professed great surprise on finding it completely buried; but said it was because the logs were green and the first fire had yet to be built that the snow hadn't melted.

"You see, though, it's all ready for a fire," he said, pointing to the stovepipe.

They returned to the saloon. After chatting over two or three steaming hot ones, Red suddenly exclaimed:

"By jove! I'm sorry I didn't meet you fellows sooner. I'm short of stuff. That thar cabin and lot would be cheap at $300. If you're a mind to pay me a hundred cash I'll give you a receipt and you can have the layout for $200. Pay me the balance when I git back and I'll have a quit claim deed made out.

They came through like lambs, and Red was well on his way toward the valley when they awoke from the effects of his birthday hospitality.

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About the hour when graveyards yawn one bitter, blustery night—so disagreeable that even red-eyed toters of bottled spirits were loth to be about—the White House saloon door suddenly opened and in fell an old bum, like a sack of wheat. He not only fell in, but sprawling on the floor, and lay there. After gazing a minute at the ceiling as in a brown study, with a heavenly smile he closed his watery eyes, then drew a deep sigh and became apparently dead to the world.

It was "Irish," an old familiar of the camp, whom nobody knew anything about except his nickname, his native wit and abnormal capacity for whiskey straight.

Billy Reese, the proprietor, hadn't had a customer for two hours and was in the act of closing for the night. But he allowed it wouldn't do to throw even Irish out on such a night; so being a practical joker he decided to have some fun. From the rear Billy brought in a six-foot plank, placed it on a couple of chairs, and over all spread a wagon sheet. Then by main strength he lifted the apparent cadaver on to the sheet, wrapped it until all that was visible was the face, smeared that with billiard chalk until it would have made a corpse shudder, and completed the picture by placing beer caps on the eyes and lighted candles at the head and feet of the departed.

A caller dropped in. After taking a drink and a glance at the uncanny exhibit, he of course went out to spread the news.

The joke proved a great stroke of business for Billy. Several saloons closed at once, in deference to the memory of their deceased patron, and soon a score of barkeepers and late rounders were lined up at the White House bar asking for drinks and how it happened.

The "taking off" was startling in its suddenness, for Irish had been the rounds several times during the evening, apparently in usual health. Brief eulogies were spoken, the consensus of sentiment expressed being that the departed was a man of whom it could be said he had but one enemy—himself.

Some one called everybody up to take a jolt in memory of the silent one, and a toast had been given—"May the old boy have a pleasant journey"—when there was heard a rustling in the corner where the corpse lay. There sat Irish, bolt upright, glaring at Billy. His quick wit had sized up the situation.

"I suppose ye do be thinking you're d——d smart, Billy Reese," he shouted. May be ye are; but don't kick it over by lavin' me out of that. Bring me four fingers of the best ye have, or I'll come and knock the dust out of ye!"

Billy took in a fat wad that night, but the other barkeeps had it in for him ever after.

⁂

If in any week Hank Williams didn't hand out a "swell" Sunday dinner at the Pitkin House, it was because his "chef" was on a skate and there was no one but himself to prepare and serve it. Regular dinners were 75 cents; Sunday swells, $1.00.

One day Hank came into my office quite excited.

"I've just hired the dandiest French cook that ever struck camp," he began, "an' am gonna get up a Sunday feed that'll knock anything previous. I want you to print a lot of "pograms" (that was what he called a menu), and sling into 'em all the 'parley voo' you know anything about."

"I savy French very little," I replied. "Of course, you will have consomme la royale." I now recall the name of but one other strictly French dish—"pate de foi gras."

"What the h—l is that?"

"Geese livers, specially prepared. You can't get them this side of Denver, if there."

"Don't fool yourself. I'll send the stable boy down the canyon after jack-rabbit livers. Nobody'll know the difference. Paddy wha'd you call 'em goes."

"Then I forgot. You must wind up with 'cafe noir.'"

"You've got me again."

"Black coffee."

"Sure, she allus goes, in French or United States. You'll think up a lot more. Then in the center I want you to print in a big red line, 'Mutton, Mutton, Mutton,' in French if you can."

And he winked. It had already been noised about that the carcass of a rocky mountain sheep—interdicted by law—was cached somewhere in camp. All denizens of the hills know, or ought to, that the flesh of this almost sacred animal—so scarce it is—is the sweetest of all meats.

"You ought to get names of dishes from the cook."

"That duck! He's a Kanaka—can't write even his own language—just has a long mustache, but I'll send him over to tell you anything he may know, and am gonna trust you to do the rest. Don't ferget to say 'one dollar a plate,' an' Henery'll be there with the goods."

Sunday afternoon the dining room was crowded. The "pogram" had been well distributed. Everybody was on to the red mutton.

There was a prolonged delay and the guests had begun to get fidgity, when old Hank, sweating like a hired man, swung open the kitchen door with a bang.

"I hear it's bein' told around that I'm employin' a fancy French cook. Mebby I am, an' mebby I ain't; but if I am he's down town drunk or a playin' stud poker, or both, and hain't been seen around here since yestiday. I want you to all understan' that Henery is a doin' this 'ere cookin' hisself an' they hain't a dam thing comin' up but mutton and pastry. Any person that don't like my style of fryin', stewin' an' bakin', an' is off his feed on that account, can get out."

This speech brought down a general hand-clap. All knew how to take old Hank when he was sore, and knew he was a pretty good cook himself. So no one stirred and the dinner was all right.

But the Pitkin House having many times and oft announced a new chef just over from Paree, who didn't materialize, in time it began to be suspected that the "jolly" proprietor had played the game to the limit.

* *

In the summer of 1883 there came to Pitkin a young Methodist divine—not of the roaring sort—just a plain, earnest worker, and though college bred and a downeaster, with sense enough not to bring any pulpit starch into a woolly community. He mingled with the boys, adopted their speech and ways as far as his calling would permit, and was popular from the jump.

One of his first moves was to have a lot of fir poles hauled to his door, and with a buck saw he reduced enough of them to stove length to last a year. This made him solid with the boys; for the idea was well grounded among them that men of the cloth drew the line on anything they recognized as real work.

An old parson who held services in a little log chapel down town, and had been kept warm in winter by "chopping bees" —claiming he had no time for anything but preparing sermons and visiting parishioners—after this example was allowed to run short of fuel. He appealed to a neighbor who had been active in keeping him supplied, asking if there was any one who could be hired to saw some wood.

The neighbor was busy, and just then couldn't think of any one, but said laconically, "You might try the new elder."

When cold weather set in there was hardly enough doing to keep everybody in plain grub. Booze being a luxury, many had to cut it out. So it came to pass that the saloons were less frequented, and the patrons having to spend their time somewhere, often dropped into the new elder's evening meetings by dozens, so that the seats were pretty well filled. Mr. Farnum, as I will call him, while not conceited, rejoiced that he was stirring up what appeared to be a spiritual awakening, and planned a season of nightly revival meetings. Summoning the assistance of a Gunnison City divine, they went at it hammer and tongs and soon had the front seats filled with calloused old sinners who had "come forward" and asked to be prayed for.

One day Mr. Farnum came into my office rubbing his hands in high glee.

"I've got nearly fifty new ones interested," he said, "including a number of regular old soaks, and it begins to look like the whole community is listening. After the clean-up here" (clean-up is a placer miners' phrase), "I believe I'll try to get a call from Leadville, or some place where there is a larger field for my style of work. I never thought of turning out to be a revivalist."

When spring came there seemed to be at least forty converts who had symptoms of becoming faithful and earnest workers in the new vineyard—as a miner would say "of staying with the New Jerusalem prospect." But the time arriving when they could go into the hills and earn a little spending money, sad to relate, one after another fell back into the old ways and shunned the elder.

Along in the summer one afternoon I met Mr. Farnum on the street, looking woe begone and as if about to shed tears.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Look over there."

On the opposite walk, clinging to an awning post and drunk as a lord was "Greasewood" Jones. Greasewood was naturally a good boy, and had turned into the new way with all the earnestness in his system.

"Out of the whole winter's harvest," said the elder, his voice trembling, "Greasewood was the very last to stay with me. All fell about the first time they were passing one of those accursed hell holes with money. Now you see he's gone, God forgive him. I told you I thought of going to Leadville. Not for me—I'm a backslider myself, if going out as soon as we can pack our belongings is a symptom, but not to any other mining camp."

With his family he went—back, I presume, to his native heath in Maine. Anyway, it was the last I ever saw or heard of my dear friends, the Farnums.

* *

One night when I was on my way via the Denver & Rio Grande to my home in the Quartz creek "crack in the mountains," a sensational incident happened suggestive of old cowboy days.

In the coach with me were but four persons—a couple of Gunnison merchants, a dudish-looking young fellow in loud togs and an eastern cap—at a glance a tenderfoot—and a quite large woman wearing a veil.

Just as we were pulling out of a wood-up station, two rough chaps in cowboy hats and wearing skates, burst into the rear door yelling and whooping.

I shall always think that on seeing there were so few passengers, and sizing up the dude, they were siezed with an inspiration that here was a chance to pose as "bad men." Anyway, both flourished revolvers, and one took a shot at the floor just as the conductor entered the front door. The official stood not "upon the order of his going," but got out, much quicker than he entered. "Scotty," so-called, was not only "discreet," but knew his best plan in such cases was to wire ahead for help.

The roughs singled out the tenderfoot, who was quaking with fear, and poking his ribs with a gun made him get up and dance a jig, after which they produced a bottle and forced him to take a strangle dose. It was a full minute before he caught his breath. Then they opened a window and allowed they were going to throw him out.

The window happened to be opposite the veiled woman. The rush of cold night air seemed to electrify her. Suddenly she slipped out of her coat, threw off her veil, and springing at the largest of the toughs, struck him with her open hand a blow on the face that could be heard in the next car, exclaiming:

"You d—d dirty coward, give me that gun!"

There was a cold glitter in her steel gray eyes that might have cowed a brave man. The gun was meekly handed over. Then she jumped on to a seat and shouted:

"Now, you two-for-a-nickel sports, sashay, both on ye, and do it d—d lively. Go to it!"

After they had shuffled up and down the aisle, showing they really knew how, she pulled the bell rope. As the train slowed down she drew a bead on the big fellow and yelled:

"You and your pardner get out of here, on the double quick. Git!"

Well, you ought to have seen those bad men, now duly sober, tumbling over each other in a rush for the door. When they were gone the woman settled into her seat, shouting with laughter. Then turning to the merchants she said:

"Well, didn't they go a jumpin' an' a

flyin'!" Then added: "If anybody should ax ye, I'm 'Cheyenne Em.'"

That name was widely known in the west. Cheyenne Em could rope and tie a steer and "bust a broncho" better than any other cow girl, and in gun practice plunk an ace as far as she could see it. While she made an awful tough record, it was said of her that she was always ready to ante her last dollar for charity's sake—a quality said to "cover a multitude of sins." Her's were nothing less.

Forty Years After.

In the dog days of 1899, needing a lay-off from arduous duties as printer, editor, devil and otherwise, I made a trip east that took in my old "stamping ground" (New York City), Philadelphia, Rochester and other points.

Side-stepping from usual routes, by a southern branch of the Denver & Rio Grand railroad I went to Ojo Caliente (warm springs), New Mexico, where is a little Mexican hamlet of the same name, and there spent a delightful month.

There are two springs, flowing side by side, near creek level from an overhanging mass of rock. Their waters are highly charged with minerals; but so different are they in analyses and taste as to suggest that Dame Nature has here easily beaten the trick of the prestidigitateur who draws wine and plain booze from the same bottle. From this outlet to her mysterious laboratory gushes two distinct sparkling streams, not half a dozen feet apart, in volume sufficient to run a small mill.

Twenty years ago Ojo Caliente was a popular resort for invalids and pleasure seekers. Instances are cited of its remarkable cures of rheumatism, kidney and nervous troubles. A pinkish calcite precipitated from the waters, when pulverized and used in the form of mud baths, was said to be a specific for virulent blood diseases. A Denver man told me in confidence he had been the victim of a syphilitic taint; that he took the mud baths for several weeks, after which an expert tested his blood and pronounced it chemically pure. I am forced to accept this statement with reservations, for there were no appliances for giving these baths with beneficial effect.

The idea of mud baths having a healing virtue may have been suggested by the story of the Master causing scales to fall from the blind man's eyes by taking up a handful of earth and after he had spat upon it applying it to the sightless organs.

Earth is well known to be a great renovator, by virtue of its drawing qualities. Neighbor Hayseed, wise to this, when he argues with a skunk and gets the worst of it by no means casteth forth his raiment, but straightway burieth it for three days and three nights, even until the morning of the fourth day. And when it is brought forth, behold, it is sweet as a nut—purified of all bad odors —thanks to the skunk. And it would seem that this treatment, if it could be applied, ought to do a bad breath some good.

While hereditary influences seem to prejudice the Yuma Indian against bathing of any sort, also moving from the spot "where he is now at" less seldom than once a day, he has frequent use for a mud application that is as effective as it is unique. When "crums" have multiplied until his hair is stiff with nits, and scratching becomes too much like work, he plasters his head with adobe and lets it dry in the sun. Then he removes the poultice by jarring it loose—no water, mind you—and the vermin, present and prospective, go with it—having died a horrible death from asphyxiation.

As the mud baths are a western invention, the manner of administering them may not be generally known. They are given daily in a box shaped like a bathtub, in which the bather lies at full length. He is plastered by an attendant from head to foot, even to his face and hair, with soft mud, then must not stir until it is thoroughly dry. He is then cleansed with hot water. After a month of this treatment the patient's system is supposed to be not only completely renovated, but he should be so lithe as to be able to jump a seven-foot fence or a board bill of any size.

Whatever virtues the waters, mud or no mud, may carry, when I was there the place as a resort was practicaly deserted —due probably to the owner's lack of enterprise. He was giving his attention to a general store—doing a good business but of peanut dimensions compared with what the resort might have done if advertised.

During my stay at Ojo Caliente I divided the time between two baths a day and rambles in the surrounding hills, more or less wooded, where there were interesting species of wild song birds and plants and flowers strange to me. I found cliff-dwellers' relics, various minerals, and a ledge of izinglass that may have been valuable. Also where a tunnel had been driven twelve or fifteen feet by cracking the rock with heat—a primitive method said to have been employed by the Spanish conquerers in their search for gold.

Each day while bathing I gave my face a thorough massage, and it became as free from wrinkles as an egg. There was bloom on my cheeks, my "bible back" had shifted, my step was firm and elastic, and but for tell-tale hair I might have passed for a proper young man.

The people of the hamlet, being Mexicans ("greasers" in the vernacular), speak broken English or none at all, and dwell in monotonous little adobe houses with few windows and adobe floors. They live close to nature, are genial, genuine and hospitable, and I saw not one who looked as if eaten by envy or desire to excite the envy of his neighbors.

By invitation I attended a fandango, given for the benefit of the local Catholic chapel—the only church in the place. It was noticeable at this gathering that silken ladies, haughty steppers and tilted noses were absent. Duennas and elderly senoras—now and then one enjoying a cigarette—posed as wall flowers and wore calicos. The young senoras and senoritas—many of them models for a studio—shone in bright calicos, simple ornaments, wild flowers and tasty hair ribbons. Only nature's bloom tinted their cheeks, and not one courted envy or a diseased spine by wearing French heels. Desire to outshine or snub less attractive turnouts was not noticeable.

I failed to notice a single signor who looked like he had been kept awake nights with pleadings that he mortgage the home to buy an auto, or was trying to support a $15 family on a $10 salary. All seemed prosperous, contented, and hospitably inclined toward the stranger within their gates. There were no lady killers at the exits, or drunken rowdies around looking for trouble.

Lest you may have obtained an unjust opinion of our swarthy southern neighbors, this is written. To get next to the cutthroat variety one has to go nearer the equator.

As the guest of an esteemed citizen of the hamlet, Juan Lopez, accompanied by his wife and daughter, I enjoyed a trip to a large spring ten miles up the creek. It is in a wild but interesting part of the valley, surrounded by rocks and jungle, with cliffs adjacent. Half of Caliente creek seems to outpour from this spring of pure cold water.

Senora Lopez speaks quite good English and was chatty; while her charming daughter—Senorita Juanita ("Rita" for short)—home on a vacation from a sisters' academy at Denver—unspoiled by contact with "civilization" wore a plain straw hat without a feather, talked of something besides clothes, ate without a fork, and sans notes or urging, sang a pretty Spanish ballad.

We passed a ranch where wheat was being threshed under horses' feet. In an enclosure like a circus ring half a dozen bronchos moving in a circle were treading on grain until it was clean of kernels, when the straw was replaced by other grain. How the kernels were finally gathered and separated from chaff and soil did not appear.

As we retraced the stream the whirr of an old-fashioned gristmill greeted my ear—a reminder of the happy childhood days I spent angling in the old mill pond, within sound of the chug-chug of an overshot wheel. The mill machinery had been rudely toggled and repaired so often as to give it a quaint home-made look. Flour was being turned out, all right—coarse and rather dark, but no doubt healthier than the boasted fine white product of the high patent process.

Not many of my readers, I imagine, have ever seen an old hand loom, such as grandmother toiled at, making fabrics that kept her loved ones warm and added to the family income. At a house where we rested I found one, with a wrinkled old dame flying the shuttles. The cloth she was making was coarse, but I'll venture to say it outlasted three suits of "store clothes." The loom with its rude frame and parts was evidently made many years ago.

Another house where we halted was a veritable hive of industry. In one corner a spinning wheel was droning a song of other days, that appealed to me —in fact, had I been reclining at ease, it might have lulled me to sleep, as grandmother's so often did. In another corner was a flax genet busily working, while at the back raw material was being dressed with hitchel and cards. The group also included two or three old dames dilligently knitting. To me this scene, once familiar in every detail, long since veiled in the misty past, was more entertaining than any tinseled show.

* *

While at the springs I often met a Spaniard who spoke perfect English, and told of having spent his early days on the coast. I learned that his name was Emanuel Cortez.

"Were you ever at Virginia City?" I asked.

"Yes, in 1862, but only for a few months."

"Afterwards, you lived with a sister in the Spanish quarter off Jackson street in San Francisco?"

"Yes, sir," he replied, staring at me with his big brown eyes.

"While in Virginia City you served as waiter in the Virginia restaurant, and was discharged for declining to take an insult from a customer."

"That is right. In heaven's name, how do you know these things?"

"Your sister's name was Barbara."

"Yes, sir."

"Do you remember that when you were discharged you had only $4 coming, and was homesick to go back to your sister?"

"Indeed I do," as if yesterday.

"You told your trouble to a patron of the restaurant and he gave you some money."

"To my dying day I'll not forget that."

"It was me that helped you out."

He grasped both my hands, and tears came in his eyes—also a twinkle.

"And do you mean to tell me you are still on earth, after eating that Virginia grub?"

"I was on the sick list for weeks with indigestion and sympathetic heart disturbance, but, as you see, pulled through."

Emanuel was a lad of 15 when I knew him. In San Francisco, aided by his sister, (older and the custodian of means left by their parents), he attended an English school until of age, when they removed to New Mexico and settled on a ranch—a part of the estate. They were now living in the village. Emanuel was a bachelor, prosperous, and his devoted sister had never married.

After this I was a frequent guest at this cozy home—the pleasantest feature of my stay in Ojo Caliente.

* *

Walking up Broadway one evening with a friend, when near Thirty-third street, we were overtaken by a shower, and stopped under an awning. In the basement of the building where we stood was a row of perfecting presses, and I learned that here was the office of the New York Herald. It was a strange coincidence that of all buildings in the great city I should have halted at this one, for while living in New York for years nearly all my work as a jour printer was in the Herald.

What a jump it had made too! It was on Ann, Nassau and Fulton streets, but a few blocks from the Battery, when I "douced my glim" for the last time in its cobwebby, lamp-smoked, ill-ventilated composing room. And what a change from the six and ten cylinder presses of forty years ago—thought at that time to be the perfection of mechanism—to the marvellous machines before me! One of these could deliver folded a hundred papers, while a ten cylinder, with a roar and crash calculated to terrify a boiler maker, was running off ten for kids to fold.

The rain continued and I easily persuaded myself to make the Herald a visit. Entering the reception room, in charge of an elderly retainer, we were politely asked our errand.

"Many years ago," I replied, "I was an employee of the Herald, and am curious to know if you have any record showing the fact."

"In what department were you?"

"I was a compositor."

"In this," he said pointing to a well-filled cabinet, are printers' payrolls dating back to the first issue of the Herald, in 1836. In what year or years were you here."

"You might try 1859."

In astonishment he looked me over, from head to foot.

"Did I understand you—1859?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why man, that was before you were born."

(Here was where my treatment at Ojo Caliente began to get in its work.)

"Anyway, please look for J. B. Graham on the payroll of that year."

He took down the volume, and found my name on the first page examined, credited with a 7,800 string. After looking me over again he exclaimed:

"Great Scott! That was forty years ago, and you don't look a day older than 35.

"That shows the preserving effect of being a Bible class leader, and being always at home and ready for bed by 9 o'clock," I said jestingly.

"Who was the foreman then?"

"I can't recall his name at this moment. Wm. Smythe was the superintendent."

After a cordial handshake with myself and friend, and extending congratulations, he touched a button and a young man appeared.

"This gentleman is an old, old Herald printer, who set type here twenty years before you were born," he said. "He and his friend have the keys of the office tonight, and are welcome to remain until weary of us. Stay with them, and don't let them go until they have been the rounds."

We passed into an editorial room.

"Well glory be! Hello, Bingham."

Thus, Eugene Young, night news editor—a descendant of Brigham Young—apostate, excommunicant, and a long way from the "center stake of Zion." He knew me in Utah as publisher of the Bingham Bulletin.

Mr. Young now learned for the first time that in other years I had labored in the Herald vineyard—when the Elder Bennett was its owner. Getting next to the fact must have given him a jolt, for leaving his table and going the rounds he introduced me to everybody in sight.

In the ad room the foreman talked with me a moment, then hit the stone.

"Gentlemen," said he, "belly up here. This is Jerry Graham, who pounded type on the Herald back in 1859."

One after another the boys shook hands with me, noticeably not with an extra-hearty grip. They were all old-timers in the office—stooped and bald or gray. It is a fact that as I stood there, fresh from the pure air of the west and its mineral waters, I was easily the youngest looking man in the room.

To set them at ease I inquired about a dozen or more of the old boys—Albaugh, Bob Crabbe, Bill Smythe, Tom Bell, Bill

Leaning, Bob McKechnie and others. All had heard of Leaning, at one time foreman of the composing room. He was no piker—had the distinction of winning a bet of $50 that he could set 125,000 in seven days, regular time, on regular book matter—besides getting in several hours' overtime at stone work. When I mentioned McKechnie there was a percеptible stir. He had also been foreman and was alive. Though he had long since ceased to "show up," his name was on the roll for a regular weekly check.

The boys stood for a few minutes in a knot by the imposing stone, glancing my way and evidently discussing me, when I heard one say:

"You hear me—I believe he's a d——d liar!"

He could not make it track straight that a man looking less than forty had worked as a jour on the paper forty years before.

It is a pertinent commentary on the effect of the long hours, nerve-exhausting work, gas light, ill ventilation and bad whisky of the old days, that of the hundreds of men with whom I was on the Herald around 1860, not a single one was known to be living. McKechnie first showed up about 1864 and a feeble old gentleman, now cutting copy, was there in 1865. The latter did not remember me, or I him.

Very few of the old morning paper printers lived to see sixty years. Few passed their fortieth year in robust health. Those who criticised them for being dissolute and unreliable did not appreciate that long hours of type setting in overheated rooms, with their heads twelve inches from hot gas lights, was a deadly occupation; but they might have suspicioned something was wrong had they noticed that all printers looked worn and pale as cadavers.

Though never but once having seen "Jimmy" Gordon Bennett—than helping him to celebrate his eighteenth birthday —I have the kindliest feeling for him, for his good heart in remembering the old boys who helped to make possible his fortunate career in life.

It came to me that night to be shown a sample of Mr. Bennett's philanthropy. When my friend and I left the office, about 11 o'clock, we had with us half-a-dozen editors, including Mr. Young. They steered us against a cafe where good provinder and liquid refreshments were served.

The feast was all right, but most enjoyable to me were the toasts and responses. One gentleman, on behalf of the Herald, welcomed me back to my old home after an absence spanning the average age of man, and hoped I would not find the many changes that had taken place had wiped out all haunts and scenes of reminiscent days around which my memory still pleasantly lingered. He said that after all my years of wandering I had better now return to the world's center, resolved to settle down in some quiet part and end my days there; that if I would go back to Bingham and throw my plant into the creek, I could come to a Herald telegraph chair and hold it down as long as I would want it—the only condition being that after warming it I must show up weekly when the ghost walked, or send some one.

There were many toasts, each moistened with good old wine. Though a guest, my western appreciation of such occasions made me feel like a piker, so I slipped a bill for "the same" to a waiter at my elbow. When we were parting the gentleman who had spoken for the Herald laid his hands on my shoulders and feelingly renewed the offer he had made. As he spoke one of his hands strayed down to a vest pocket, and I distinctly felt his fingers inside. I was not in a mood to question their perfect right there.

I stopped at the old Astor house and was assigned to "President James Buchanan's suite"—during his administration. Nearly every select room in the old hostelry was named for some noted person who had used it in the long ago.

In the morning when dressing I recalled the circumstance of the fingers in the pocket, and on investigation found there the identical bill I had slipped to the waiter. Incidentally, it was broken to buy the usual remedy for "hot coppers."

On the trip I visited Philadelphia, during the reunion of the grand army there, but did not stop at Rochester, for reasons that are next to a tender subject and may not lack in interest. As the train pulled into the Rochester depot I stood in a sleeper vestibule, hesitating whether to halt or proceed on my journey. It was this way:

My last visit to this my native city was twenty years before, and occupied about eight hours. Arriving one Sabbath morning, when the walks were filled with people on their way to church, I obtained a carriage and riding slowly scanned the crowds, hoping to see familiar faces. Most of my 'teens were spent there, and of the 36,000 the city contained when I left it, at 18, there were comparatively few whose features were not more or less familiar. After a score of years there was not one face I could recognize as ever having seen before.

Driving to a residence where some relatives had formerly lived, I rang the bell. A stately looking lady of four-score years and snow white hair, bright eyes and well-preserved features, answered the summons.

"Do you know me?"I asked.

"Do I know my own?" she exclaimed, placing her arms about my neck.

She was a very dear old aunt, who had been like a mother to me. Living mostly in the far west, when communication was not as easy as now, I had been lost to her for many years.

During a short, busy visit, I learned that of all my relations whom I particularly cared for she was the only one remaining in the city, and so far as she knew not more than half-a-dozen were alive.

A short drive brought me to the old Graham homestead. We used to call it two miles in the country—it being in the township of Irondequoit. Now it was just across the street from the city limits—zigzag-fenced farms en route had given way to city lots and dwellings, there were sidewalks all the way, and in place of the rough country road was a macadamized thoroughfare. The past was a dream. And ah, the memory of it!

The old home, though in many ways showing the footprints of time, did not seem much changed. There was the dear white cottage where I was born, the faded red horse barn where

"The swallow sang sweet by its nest in the
wall,"

the grain barn, the cattle sheds where "Crumpie" and "Spot" and "Sally" munched in silent content, the rail fences and bars—even a patch of potatoes and early corn, as was wont to be, along the little lane that led to the house yard—all as my mind's eye had held them throughout the years.

A pudgy, jolly-looking German met me at the gate.

"Is there any one by the name of Graham living in this neighborhood?" was my first question.

"Grame—Grame? No, sir."

"Has any one by that name ever lived around here?"

"No, sir. I haf been on dis place fourteen year, and know everybody."

We stood in the shade of a cherry tree, sprung no doubt from the roots of one I had climbed many times and picked from its branches bushels of fruit. Near by

"The jassamine clambered with its flowers
o'er the thatch"

of the covered well, though "the old oaken bucket" and its clumsy sweep had given place to a modern water lift. I thought of the many dear associations twining around the mouldering old curb. It seemed as though my sainted sister had stood by it but yesterday. And then, the feeling of sadness that came over me with the thought that from the fading cottage "the voices of loved ones" would never again reply to my call!

"Maybe some one of that name has lived in this very house," I continued.

"No, sir."

"You say you have been here fourteen years. The house is old. It might have been built more than fifty years ago."

"My gootness! Dot house is no more as twenty-five year built, no, sir"—no doubt having in mind the value of his belongings. "Anyways, my neighbors never tell me of such peoples."

"There is a little bedroom in that corner, is there not?"

"Yes, sir."

"When a boy I was told of being born in that room. My name is Graham, and I am close to fifty."

"Vell, is dot so?"

"This ground here is but a small patch of what was once my father's farm. About 1820 he took up 150 acres of government land, and later built all the improvements here. Take me through that porch door to the orchard, and I can convince you that I was once familiar with some things that were here when you came.

As we passed through the portal into the shade of a noble old apple tree I noted that here was little change.

"The spider o'er the lintel weaves
  Its labyrinth of silver threads;
The sunbeams, shining thro' the leaves
  A ground work of mosaic spreads."

Most of the orchard showed extreme age. Here and there were new trees—in places only stumps.

"This tree where we stand," I said, "was one of my favorites. It is a fall pippin. The next is a greening and the balance of the row are greenings."

"Dot iss so."

"The next row is greenings, the next golden russets, the next spitzenbergs, and the rest are earlier fruits. Where that tall stump is was a pear tree."

Tears glistened in the old man's eyes.

"I vas back in the faderland just, and vould gif my life to see my old home vunce yet, as you see dis blace."

Beyond was the meadow; but farther on "the deep tangled wildwood" had given way to a great nursery occupying the rest of the old estate. To my view, only the crumbling homestead was left.

"So fleet the works of man back to the earth
again,
Ancient and holy things fade like a dream."

Should not man himself had first-place in the poet's reverie? For though my father's works, as I now reverently saw them, inevitably and utterly would pass away, a generation had come and gone since he laid down his burden. He was constantly at the crank, turning, turning, no doubt with a feeling that were he to let go all that he had wrought would fall to ruin. Yet he had to stop, and the world moved on.

Were he—so of us all—a closer student of nature, how much lighter his earthly cares might have been. In life's December one of the lessons that with little variation must come to us all is, how much more joy and comfort there might have been if nature had been allowed to have its way and we had turned to enjoy the bright and beautiful on every hand—vouchsafed to the lowliest as to the highest could we but see it so—and thus dismissed a host of wearying troubles, not least the crossing of innumerable bridges never to be passed.

I must here relate by way of illustration, an instance of borrowed agony shared in by the whole township of Irondequoit—an utterly foolish and useless frenzy, that carried not a few to untimely graves:

"When I was a very little orphan, but precocious observer else it would not seem as if yesterday, the town was enveloped in a cloud of manufactured woe, lowering as it did over nearly every home. Missionaries of a sect called Millerites—forebears I believe of the present Seventh Day Adventists—had converted nearly everybody to the belief that the world was about to cash in. The day, even the hour, was set when the great game, so many millions of years old, would turn up the box. The only time when the sinless elect—who in a year had not cooked their meals on a Sunday—really enjoyed the little of life remaining was when they had wrought themselves into a frenzy at prayer meetings. Then they were really glad to feel they were on the last lap, and would shout and sing, even dance as well as pray.

Meetings were held every week at our house, is why the doings came to be so impressed on my memory. I used to climb to an attic window, to be the first to tell of an angelic skirmish line actually in sight. Between meets the gloom was simply awful. The date for the pyrotechnics was drawing nearer and nearer, and the poor, haggard-faced fanatics would throw chills when they thought of the hour when the band would toot its first blast.

Several dates predicted for the grand event went shy. I don't remember the excuses given—probably on account of changes in the weather. But in the year 1843, as it came to pass, it was finally given out that Gabriel would positively blow his horn at 9 o'clock sharp on a certain night in the dark of the moon. This main incident is particularly recalled because, I remember, it also came to pass that a large assortment of enthusiasts collected in our yard with ringed, streaked and speckled ascension robes under their arms. No one could take treasures along, but they just had to have robes—every soul had to appear before the throne of grace in a calico shirt.

As there was no sense in even a kid turning in on that last night, I had to sit up with the rest.

An ominous thunder storm with distant mutterings was gathering in the southwest, and but for lightning flashes the night was dark as a pocket. Suddenly, at five minutes before time—if the clock was right—to the southwest in the orchard were to be seen four lights, in a row and moving rapidly toward the house. I still think I heard teeth chattering all around me as those awful though noiseless lights came into view. The whole flock dropped to their knees. The bell wether tried to lift his voice in prayer, but couldn't make it. On opening his eyes he saw four belated ewes clambering over the yard fence. They had cut across lots to "get there," and be translated with the crowd.

Some time later there came a heavy storm and great snowdrifts banked in the roads. A farmer riding in a sleigh made his way, slowly, until he came to a huge bank that defied further progress. Climbing to the top he found that another farmer, his team stalled, was on the other side with shovel in hand digging a passage.

"Hello!" he shouted. "What you doin' down there?"

The digger was evidently a non-believer, for he answered, "I'm a figerin' that there's a d—d sight of difference between this here and the world burning up."

Just think of the borrowed trouble, the anguish suffered by those three-ply saints during the years that Millerism was rampant! Broaden this reflection and what mortal can conceive of the time worse than wasted—now as then, and as it always has been—trying to peep through the dark wall that hides from mortal view the great beyond, while prodigal nature's wondrous gifts to man, that make a heaven of earth if not repelled, are brushed aside or passed unnoticed.

* *

An old neighbor and his good wife—a lovely young woman when I was a lad, now feeble and white haired—were still living on their farm near by. They were rejoiced to see "Squire Graham's youngest son," and would not listen to my going away until I had broken bread with them. What a visit it was—during which

I learned that of the old near neighbors not another one was left!

A mile distant I found a cousin living in the farm house her parents had occupied long before she was born. There was only the homestead left—the farm having been parceled and sold as city lots. She was much older than I, but had taken a lively interest in me as a susceptible young man—even came near mating me with a young spinster of the vicinity. She tipped the scales at 120 pounds, was spry at a dance and a rare single-handed talker. Imagine my surprise on now finding her a freak, weighing 300 pounds, only able to waddle about with crutch and stick. She did not know me. When told who I was she tardily gave me her hand, with a common place word as if greeting an everyday caller. Only by many recallings of old times did she finally awake to the occasion, after which followed an enjoyable chat.

* *

Is it strange that as I now passed through my native city, viewing it perhaps for the last time, there was no tugging at my heartstrings? On the former occasion, as here related, of the thousands of my connections and people whom I had intimately known I had met but four. Had it been a week day, a round of the print shops might have put me next to one or more of the "old boys;" but not likely. The only one I knew to be living was James B. Spinning, who is now a pensioner if living, and long since off the active list.

What food for reflection there was in that lonely return to the old scenes, and what a commentary on the insignificance of a human life. My father was easily the most successful and best known citizen of Irondequoit township. His farm was a model. He was justice of the peace for twenty years, and as a country attorney had a lucrative practice. It was said of Squire Graham that during his many years as justice he had officiated at every wedding in the town, while his farm was often a Gretna Green for city couples wanting to steal a march on their friends. His personal records, covering many hundreds of pages, are in evidence that he must have done a thriving business in the hymeneal line. The entries varied little except in names, thus: "Appeared before me this day Jehiel Lambert and Spinster Nancy Mehitabel Wilsie," etc., "and were duly united in the holy bonds of matrimony."

Like most very busy men, my father was no doubt so inspired by his importance as to believe that should he be suddenly called to let go of the crank his little world would cease turning and all would collapse. Yet within a week, perhaps a month, after his heart was stilled, the community, the farm and the family were getting on without him, and the administrator had laid plans for grabbing most of the state—these so absorbing his attention that he even neglected or forgot to set a stone to mark the grave.

It was reserved for me to learn, only forty years after, that no one knew just where my father's remains were laid; that he had planned, and worried, and wrought for the most part apparently in vain; that while the home he had made was still there, though crumbling and going "back to the earth again," perhaps not six persons still remembered that he had ever lived.

My Last Venture.

On the 25th of December, 1895, I published my first number of the Bingham (Utah) Bulletin, of which I had a week before become "editor, publisher and sole proprietor," without paying a dollar down and with nowhere to get one. It was this way:

After working several years in a Salt Lake job office—averaging three to four days a week and practicing economy—I found myself in debt and facing a season that promised to be uncommonly dull.

One day when I had been browsing on gloom until in a reckless mood, I met the then owner of the Bulletin, who offered to sell it to me on time, as he was ill and wanted a change of climate. I have heard since that he was love sick, and the girl had married "another."

I shied at even the fare to Bingham, but went with him, looked the layout over, and concluded to take a long chance.

Bingham Canyon, as the camp is called, at that time had 1,500 people, mostly miners, with enough weather-beaten, tumble-down shacks to cover them. There were some quite respectable business buildings, two large general stores, a meatmarket, several small shops and half a dozen wide-open saloons. The camp lies for miles along an uninteresting canyon. A California writer once happily described it as being sixty feet wide and nine miles long. The tourist looking for scenery could find much to interest along the rocky ridges, overhanging cliffs and high mountains beyond; but there were no sidewalks flanking the one main street, and it being badly cut up by heavy ore wagons, one had to stand or walk in mud four to six inches deep, while the extreme upper part of the camp could only be reached on foot by two hours' of walking in the same.

At a glance the outlook was forbidding. City dailies were circulated every morning by 10 o'clock, making the field for a skinny weekly seem bare as a goose pasture. "No wonder this young man is feeling unwell," I thought. "He ought to get some relief, wherever he goes." But I put in a couple of days looking around, and saw things.

As the business center and shipping point of West Mountain mining district, Bingham was annually sending out 60,000 to 65,000 tons of good silver-lead ore.

It was the distributing point for hundreds of small mines and prospects—many of the latter barely scratched over. It was the terminal of a twelve-mile branch railroad, said to be making more money for its size than any other road in the United States. It had a horse tramway several miles long, actively used in connection with a number of mining properties—one with an alleged $20,000,000 product record; and in the district were four large concentrating mills. Along the creek over a million dollars' worth of placer gold had been recovered, and sluicing was still going on. In many places the quartz veins had run into base ore, containing copper, added to which the presence of ¼ of 1 per cent copper in solution flowing from springs, and copper-stained rock profusely scattered along some of the ridges, suggested that sooner or later the red metal in large quantities was liable to become a factor in the productions. Not least among favorable conditions, there was always good money in circulation, independent of outside financial influences—which decided me.

A half-worn dress for a 7-column folio, a fine hand press, an imposing stone, etc., and the good will, whatever that might have been, were to be mine on payment of $800 within two years —a first installment of $200 being due in ninety days.

My first number took well and quite a lot of subscriptions at $3 came in. Expenses were met from the jump, but at the end of three months nothing had been laid by, which didn't look good to me. When my esteemed predecessor showed up he still had a pain, but thought if he could go back to his old home in Kansas he would soon be all right. I told him how rough things were coming, but for a bluff asked what he would take cash down and call it square. He said with $500 in hand he could start a small business, and offered to settle for that.

I had a slight acquaintance with a gentleman in Salt Lake who was at the head of a Bingham mine that was shipping plenty of rich ore, selling many shares of company stock above par, and reputed to have much money on hand. While standing on a city street corner one day, something whispered that I should go to him and make a bluff with some sand in it. Five minutes later I was standing by his desk.

"Mr. Blank," I said, after exchanging compliments, "I want $500."

"There's lots of people in your boat, now same as always, that will continue to want," he replied. "What for?"

I made necessary explanations, looking him straight in the eyes. It seemed as if I could read there that a time might come for him when it would be real nice to stand in with newspaper men. (On the side, that time came.)

"Please sit down a moment and look at the paper," was all he said.

At the end of ten minutes he handed me a check for $500, and a note to sign, at 7 per cent payable in two years. In gratefully thanking him, I said I might be able to find a responsible friend to back the note.

"D—n that! You'll meet it or you won't. I'm satisfied you will if you can."

But for this whole-hearted, disinterested kindness, my Bulletin enterprise would have failed.

So, within twenty minutes after that lucky hunch I had the purchase price, and in less than an hour the sick man had shook hands with the sucker and gone on his way rejoicing.

Soon afterwards business began to pick up. There was a steady run of mining patent and other legal notices, while commercial printing began to call for a jobbing outfit. I put in a good one, with two jobbers and an electric plant, and was fortunate in securing the best and truest all-around country printer I ever met.

Lacking special mention of him—O. D. Brainerd—this sketch would not only be incomplete but evidence of ingratitude. Before he came the mechanical work had been gone over by a string of alleged "all-arounds"—probably as good or better than the place then deserved.

Brainerd was a genius. Asking no questions he installed the electric plant and connections so they ran like a clock. He knew when a press needed "fixing," knew how to do it, and fixed it; arranged the office to the best advantage, and bulldosed me when additions were necessary; did first-class work, laid plans to "get there," and never failed to arrive. Whenever there was a snag ahead he rang up the "old man" to fill two or three galleys.

"Los," as we called him, rarely showed up before 9 or 10 in the morning; but he came to stay. Then he would leisurely limber up his cob pipe, cuss the kid a few times for "leaving feathers," tie some reminders on his little finger, and in a halo of tobacco smoke proceed to pull his coat. Sometimes he did not show up at all "next day." There was a wide-open poker game in every saloon, and he doted on sitting in along in the evenings, quitting about midnight or when broke. As also may be inferred, the bars were wide-open, all the time, and Los aimed to go to bed with his boots on once in a while.

Did I ever call him down? Not me, During five years there was never a jar between us, coming or going. He was absolutely fair, as I tried to be with him, and took as much interest in the business as if he owned it. That was all there was to it. When "musts" were on the hook they would come off, if he had to work all night. I never imposed on him in any way, or he on me. I paid him over the city scale; never docked him, and he never charged overtime. Now and then when the ghost walked he would excuse himself like this:

"Boss, I've been a piker this week; but will catch even when there's lots to do."

For two or three years Brainerd was in bad odor with the union—suspended—but squared things while in Bingham. This is how he queered himself: Work being slack in Salt Lake he and his wife—a good compositor—went to Ogden, a one-daily town. He caught on, but finding, as he stated to me, that the office was working such tricks as a type measure a line too long and no standing time, on the second day denounced the chapel and left. Then he met an old friend, once his side partner, who was running an open job office. The friend was doing a fine business and offered Brainerd a permanent job at $2 over the scale, saying it was the union that was unfair, not he. Brainerd could well believe this after his late experience, and determining to go to headquarters with the trouble, accepted the offer. This is the explanation he made to me. Of course, he had no right to take the bits in his teeth and was suspended—to the delight of the sore chapel members whom he had denounced.

He had been with me nearly two years before I became acquainted with these facts. All this time I had supposed him to be a member of Salt Lake (No. 115). My office was ostensibly under the jurisdiction of that union; but as most of the Utah country shops were at that time too poor and ornery to enforce union rules, they were all consigned to the go-as-you-please class.

Knowing there was not a rat's hair on him, I determined to do all I could to have him reinstated. Some of the Ogden members fought hard in opposing him, but it was finally settled, and Los became a prominent and useful member of No. 115 after paying a heavy fine.

I was so impressed by the red metal possibilities of Bingham that the Bulletin, while I had it, lost no opportunity to "talk copper." My first number had this item in its mining news:

> ### IMPORTANT ENTERPRISE.
>
> The Bingham Copper company, recently organized to develop the Starius group of mines, may prove to be promoting one of the most important enterprises of this camp, for there is abundant evidence of the fact that Bingham canyon, or the section drained by its springs, is the depository of immense bodies of copper. One of the springs, below the Starius, runs a little over one miner's inch, or about one hundred pounds per minute, carrying ¼ of 1 per cent copper; and as each minute slides down the corridors of time four ounces of copper thus runs to waste from this one spring alone. In all probability this little stream was running at the dawn of the Christian era; and by computation we find that during this period 268,861,000 pounds of the red metal have gone to waste—enough to make a belt for the world eight inches broad by one-sixteenth of an inch thick, and have 4,000,000 pounds left for "buckles and spangles."
>
> "Where there is smoke there is fire," and where there is such a steady outpouring of

copper in solution there must be a marvelous storehouse to feed it.

It was several years later before active copper mining began. Samuel Newhouse became interested in a group of claims known as the Highland Boy—on a large gold vein of low-grade—and forming a company put up in connection a $75,000 cyanide mill. Several month's of running at a loss demonstrated that copper in the ore made cyaniding out of the question. Below the third level it contained 2 to 7 per cent of the red metal.

The company then made radical changes in its plans—developed the vein down to the seventh level, enlarged its holdings, built a $1,000,000 smelter down in the valley and soon began to coin money—meantime having changed its name to the Utah Consolidated.

Mr. Newhouse relinquished his interest for a large sum, said to have been $4,000,000. His experience with the Highland Boy furnished a rare instance of "miner's luck." When buying it he had no more idea than a rabbit of what he was getting. Just the same, he had the energy and courage to try to make the best of a bad blunder—thus becoming the pioneer of what is now Bingham's chief industry.

The great success of the Utah Consolidated opened the eyes of other holders of copper-bearing ground, and in an incredibly short time—but half-a-dozen years—Bingham was transformed from a declining silver-lead producer to a red metal center—in the west second only to Butte City.

One day while walking between the lower and upper towns into which Bingham is now divided, I fell in with Dr. J. B. Lamb, formerly a celebrated chemist and manufacturer of sulphuric acid. We were on an immense porphyry dyke that cuts through the district—barren of mineral so far, I believe, as any one then knew. He said to me:

"This rock under our feet contains from 1 to 2 per cent of disseminated copper. I'm not saying this to every one, but having tested many samples know what I'm talking about. In the lake region ore of even less value is being treated and big dividends from it declared. Some day this great dyke will cause a stir and develop great mines."

He was forecasting "wiser than he knew."

Within a few days E. A. Wall, who had operated for years in Bingham with varying success, located the Dick Mackintosh and Clark claims near where the doctor and I had stood (acting on such a hint from him as I had received). He put a couple of men at work on the ground with instructions to drive a tunnel straight into the hill until they were told to stop.

They had been digging a month when one day Mr. Wall called and found they had turned from the true course several points.

"What in thunder are you fellows doing!" he exclaimed. "Are your eyes crooked?"

"Well," said one, "we ran into such good indications back there I thought that by turning we might encounter a vein."

"Vein! Who said anything about a vein? You hike back, straighten this work out, and keep it straight or call for your time."

These men, old miners, did not know they had been running in so-called ore all the time, and would have gone out into the open to laugh if told they were doing preliminary work on what was to be one of the greatest copper mines in the world.

Mr. Wall shrewdly saw before him a possible great opportunity, and was singularly fortunate in securing the attention of capitalists. Having satisfied himself by experimentation that the big dyke contained a paying proposition of untold extent, he located a group of claims and succeeded in selling it to what is now the Utah Copper Company. The transaction made him a multi-millionaire.

The new owners were active mining men with plenty of capital, and fortunate in having Colonel D. C. Jackling for general manager. With great pluck and energy Mr. Jackling inaugurated operations the character of which is attested by what has resulted.

Brief reference to what this company has accomplished turns light on the wonderful transformation of Bingham, begun while I was still there. It began active work in November, 1903—about twelve years ago. It built reductions works in Bingham canyon, which the ore production soon outgrew. Then it installed two immense mills at Garfield, twenty miles distant—the nearest favorable location—and built a connecting railroad. Up to July last it had mined and milled 31,500,000 tons of ore—the last June output having been 22,000 tons daily. The gross value of metal production to June 1st was nearly $86,000,000, and dividends paid were in excess of $23,000,000. The indicated ore remaining was 361,000,000 tons.

Considering that the Utah Copper Company, almost from its inception the subject of bitter and persistent adverse critisicm, has thus made a record rivaling the wonders of the Comstock in its palmy days, the result must be a source of immense gratification to Mr. Jackling as well as humiliation to the author of the attacks.

There are now several other great copper properties in Bingham, though of lesser importance. Compare the present with the year before copper mining began, when, as stated in this sketch, after half a century of existence the camp's total product was 65,000 tons of silver-lead ore!

The altitude of Bingham—5,600 feet above sea level—affected me so seriously that my physician advised me to leave the mountains. An opportunity offering, I sold the Bulletin and removed to Salt Lake City, at a time when I had been privately informed that millions were about to be expended in developing the new mines. Five years later the population had increased to 6,000.

* *

In the first issue of the paper under the new management was a scare-head sensation reflecting on the United States Mining Company, owning large interests in the camp. Its stock was quoted at a high figure—alleged to have been boosted and held up by a coterie of sharp Boston men of unlimited means. A. F. Holden was their managing director.

The attack was based on private letters which had passed between Holden and the president of the outfit—stolen for a consideration, they had reason to suspect, from the safe of the company's Salt Lake office—indicating that the concern was in bad lines and liable to unload and leave a confiding public to hold the bag.

(Without consulting a spiritual medium I can describe the light-haired man who stole those documents, also the gray-haired person who paid roundly for them.)

The publication caused consternation on the Boston and New York mining exchanges. United States stock went down $5 in a day. Something had to be done, quick; and the sharp clique were equal to the emergency. They offered to buy all stock at the old price, and it is said soon had more than they were yearning for—about all there was. The ruse worked beautifully, restoring former confidence.

Then the miraculous happened, for which I believe Holden managed to get the credit. The company held an option on the Centennial Eureka mine in Tintic (Utah) district, former heavy producer, gutted of about everything of value in sight. Many thousands of dollars had been expended in searching for a new ore body, and there was talk of giving up the quest when the superintendent in charge—a bright mining engineer—on his own initiative swapped ends with the work and ran a drift in a direction where neither Holden nor any one else but the engineer believed there was a stringer. He cut into a marvelous deposit from which millions have since been taken.

I have here brought in twice-told matter, because Holden in a scurrilous way drew my name into the company's scare, and blackened me. In Boston at the time, it behooved him to do something. As soon as he heard of the Bulletin article he went to the mining exchange and there denounced the editor (meaning me, though I had disposed of the paper and was in California), as a black mailer, declaring I had tried to work him personally and was now only after bigger game. This ruse is said to have had a marked effect in the restoration of confidence that followed.

I could have cinched Holden for criminal libel, but only with the defendant in Boston, appealing the case and gumshoeing. So I gave it up as a probable costly job. The Bulletin had numerous subscribers in Boston and New York who had learned to respect its mining reports. After that, though out of business, I got a leer from those who met me. There is nothing in language more potent to blast a man's character than that one word, blackmailer!

* *

Many incidents worth relating that I must leave untold occurred in Bingham during the years I was there.

There is little in mining camps of the present, or among their present people, to remind one of the romance and drama pictured in sketches such as "The Luck of Roaring Fork" and "The Outcasts of Poker Flat." Yet acts of gallant heroism, disinterested sympathy, foolhardy recklessness, and not least cussedness, now and then hark back to the days of the argonauts.

Some of the meanest as well as best people I ever knew dwelt in the hills. No one ever turns up there with the settled purpose of making a camp his permanent abiding place. If a man has a brown streak, or is all mean, in the wilds he often develops a propensity to indulge his meaner part, play advantages and get a "stake" no matter how, with the view of skipping to the elsewhere. Time was when such characters would "assume a virtue though they had it not," out of a wholesome respect for Judge Lynch or fear of being given so many hours to hit the trail. Now, their main fear is officers of the law—too often of a piece with themselves and a weakness for "standing in."

Shortly after I went to Bingham a young man recently arrived was accidentally killed in the Highland Boy mine, leaving destitute a wife and four little children. The poor mother was frantic and in despair. Though they were strangers, neighbors not only gathered around the bereaved ones to extend sympathy, but donated a handsome sum, with which the widow was enabled to equip and stock a restaurant. Many went out of their way to patronize her, and she prospered. For years she has been the hostess of a large hotel. Her children have now families of their own, while she has a bank acount that will support her in ease. How different it might have been if this estimable family had been left to the mercy of less sympathetic communities that I have known, in states where people are prone to think of the rough denizen of the hills as half civilized.

I love Bingham for that noble act.

* *

Ed Cleary, a witty Irishman with a rich brogue, and Nick Castro, a sharp-eyed Greek—characters whom the whole camp knew—were peaceably disposed when duly sober and reckoned pretty good citizens. One night they put on skates, quarreled, and pounded each other until separated by bystanders.

About midnight Nick adjourned to his cabin; but Ed, having had the worst of it, lingered to drown his chagrin, likewise meditate revenge. Having cooled his coppers with a matutinal cocktail, he went out to warm himself in the early sunshine, and was leaning heavily against an awning post when Nick came riding by on a broncho. Without a word Ed pulled a revolver and pumped a couple of holes in his adversary's hat.

In a frenzy of rage the Greek threw up his clinched fists, exclaiming:

"Hi, there, what you do! You d—d fool, you will kill my hoss!"

His concern for the safety of his mount without thought of his own danger, so challenged the admiration of Erin's son that he threw his gun at a passing dog and begged Nick to join him in a friendly jolt. They drank and became the best of friends.

* *

A man with a "Greek" accent, naturally genial in nature but with habits hardened and calloused by weary waiting, was as ungrateful to me as any one I ever met.

He had a hunch from the seventh son of a seventh son that some time in the more or less distant future the mines of Bingham would make him rich. So he lost no opportunity to furnish grubstakes and otherwise put himself in the way of getting in on new locations. One after another of his several partners, weary of always waiting, got disgusted and pulled out, leaving him sole owner of several claims that were better than they knew.

With an abiding faith in printer's ink this man, whose surname was Flynn, made it a point to stand in with the editor. When a good showing was opened in any of his holdings I was sure to be steered against it, and made notes accordingly; so that in the course of several years his items aggregating several columns appeared in the paper—some of them he figured being as bait thrown out to buyers—in other words, free advertising.

One time Flynn got into a tight corner and applied to me to help him out. He had never seemed to appreciate favors—other than by now and then handing me a bad cigar—but I thought him honest, and took his note for a considerable sum. Several years' interest had accrued, when opportunity knocked at his door and he sold a claim for $50,000. Then he removed to Salt Lake and settled in a fine home.

Grateful for many favors, did he come a running to take up that note, and thank me? On the other hand, when I at length asked him for a settlement he intimated that the paper was outlawed and worthless; that anyway I had nerve to dig up an old thing like that. But by dint of much talking, and aided by his good wife, I succeeded in shaming him into a settlement at a shave of 20 per cent.

This instance was one among others so contemptible as to shake my faith in human nature. Yet by no means was it necessary to go about with a search warrant to find gratitude and whole-hearted friendship in Bingham. Among its people are some of the best it has been my pleasure to have ever met.

⁂

Isn't it singular that nowadays no one ever sees a so-called ghost, or reads about ghosts not creatures of the romancer's fancy, while two generations ago belief in such things, among fanatical and ignorant people at least, was so broadcast there were few who would not affirm they had seen them, or go near a cemetery at "the dread hour when graveyards yawn," unless they had to? Looking farther back—thousands of years—even sacred writings seem to indicate that wraiths, hobgoblins, spirits and devils were then numerous enough to outvote real flesh and blood, two to one.

I have never been able to accept any so-called proof that there is, or ever has been, communication between this beautiful world and a possible next, high or low, and must believe that natural causes, some time to be scientifically explained and understood, have ever led fanaticism to imagine it "saw things"—to construe the effect of late heavy suppers into visions and prophetic pointers.

An instance of telepathy or thought transference, so-called, was the only demonstration bordering on the supernatural —if it was such—that ever came into my life. It revives a tender memory, and will now be told for the first time.

At about 6 o'clock on the first night of this twentieth century I was sitting at my table writing, when there came three light but distinct taps on my office door. I called "Come in!" but immediately went to the door, ten feet away, and opened it. There was no one there, or near by.

It was a moonlit night, so I could see distinctly up and down the street. The air was so cold that the creaking of frozen snow would have warned me of a footstep on the veranda.

A letter had that morning informed me that my only brother was very ill at a sanitarium at Battle Creek, Michigan. Strangely, from the moment I arose, a strong impression took possession of me that he was at the door—that I was about to meet him—and my hand trembled as I raised the latch.

My living quarters were in the same building, and a door stood ajar between the office and the sitting-room, where my wife was by a table reading.

"Did you hear a knock?" I asked.

"Yes; who was it?'

"Stanley." (That was my brother's name.)

"What do you mean?"

"The impression that my brother has been here is so strong with me I am trembling."

"That is no doubt mere fancy, caused by this morning's letter. Did you see anyone?"

"No. There was no one near the door, or I should have heard a noise. I am convinced we are soon to receive more bad news, and will have cause to remember this hour.

Three days later another letter came, saying my brother passed away at 8 o'clock New Year's night.

The difference in time between Bingham and Battle Creek is about two hours; so it is a fact that the change came to him not far from the moment when we heard the rapping.

I have a theory possibly accounting for this manifestation—presuming it was not a mere coincidence. After my brother had said farewell to the dear ones at his bedside, and lay dying, what more natural than that his thoughts went out to the companion of his childhood? During our younger years we ate and slept together, and were nearly inseparable. There was no joy, pleasure or sorrow for one that both did not share. He became a machinist, I a printer. When not at work it was rare for us not to be together. He at length married, and I went to seek my fortune. Through the many years following we did not often meet; but he never gave me to think absence dulled his affection for me. On the contrary, in maturity the ties between us seemed stronger.

I do not pretend to account for the materialistic part of this manifestation—the knock at the door—if it was really a case of thought transference. I neither believe nor doubt, for in matters hidden from the ken of mortal man of what avail is it to say "I believe?" Ingersoll in his scathing criticisms merely ridiculed so-called religious "beliefs." He did not deny, but honestly and fearlessly disposed of the whole subject when he said, "I don't know."